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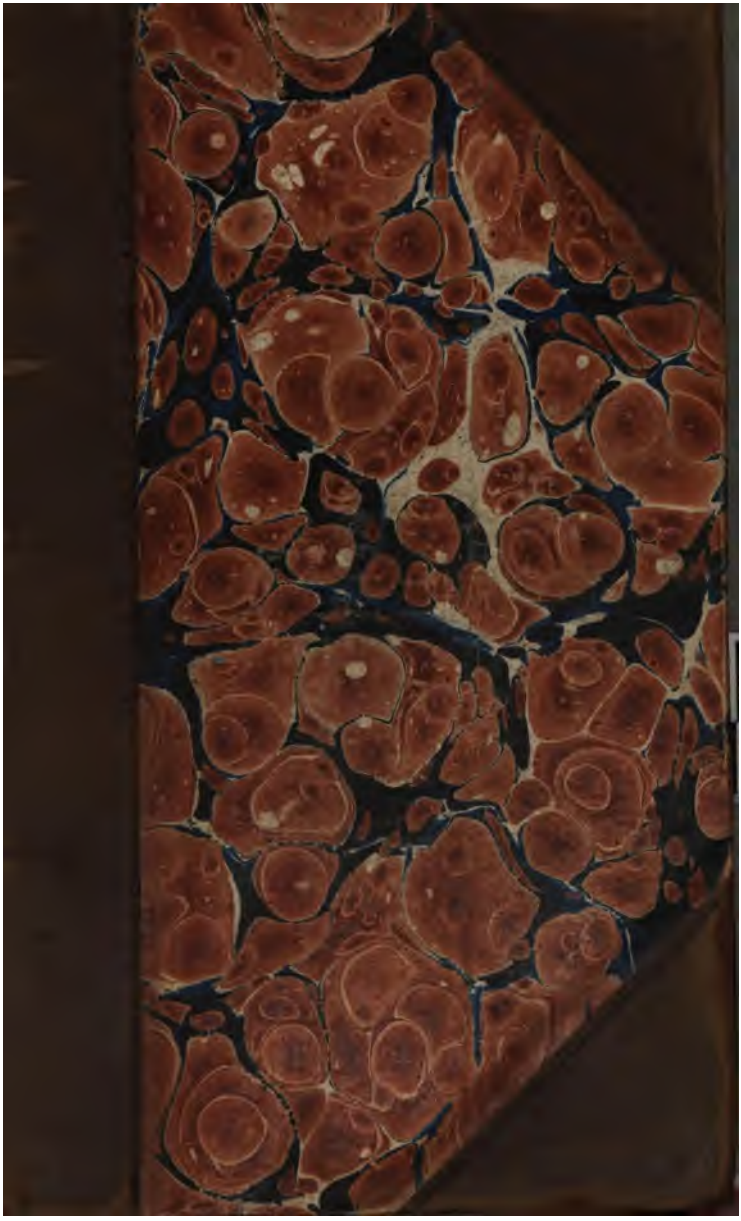

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THE

MOURNER'S SOLACE.

THE

MOURNER'S SOLACE:

A

Devotional Anthology.

Although thy path be clouded o'er,
And gloom o'erhangs thy future lot,
Bless God, and love him more and more,
And though thou mourn'st, O murmur not!

A. OPIE, adapted.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE SOLACE OF AN INVALID."

LONDON:

J. HATCHARD AND SON,

187, PICCADILLY.

1836.

181.

LONDON:
JOSEPH RICKERBY, PRINTER,
SHERBOURN LANE.

CONTENTS.

	Page
INTRODUCTION	vii
Grief	1
Resurrection	14
Hymn	28
The ever present God	30
The Pilgrim of Earth	42
Aspirations	44
Prayer in Affliction	46
The Mourner's Remembrancer	47
Consolation	56
The Happiness of Favour with our Creator	58
Ascriptions of Praise	71
Dejection	74
Hope of Futurity	76
Sacred Song	79
Probation	81
The Friend deceased	84
Prayer	87
God is Love	88
Motives for Consolation	89
Submission	90
God unsearchable	107
Death	108

Page

The Mourner's Hope 113
" Peace be with you " 114
Resignation 115
" There is a Spirit in Man " 123
Hymn 128
Musings 130
Christian Consolation 137
Hymn to Hesperus 138
Contemplation of God in the Wonders of his Creation 141
God our Trust 154
Beneficence 156
Stanzas 168
The Oratory 170
Prayer on Bereavement 186
Prayer 189
Hymn 191
Prayer 193
Religion 197
Supplications for Faith 198
Prayer for Divine Aid 200
Prayer for Patience 202
For Submission 204
Hymn 207
Aspirations 208
Musings on the Past 211
Prayer for entire Resignation 215

INTRODUCTION.

"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Cor. i. 4.

In the spirit of these words of the apostle, the following pages have been penned. They contain no speculative theory to soothe the pangs, no untried remedy to heal the wounds inflicted by the arrows of human woe, but the practical results of experience, in proof that the exhaustless fountain from which the apostle *drew comfort himself*, and so affectionately

offered to those in tribulation and anguish, is indeed of sovereign efficacy. The writer, long familiar with affliction and the paralyzing effects of grief, has individually experienced the reviving and all-healing power of the heavenly balm; hence she can, with firmest confidence, and does with affectionate earnestness, recommend it in the ensuing pages, as the effectual "Solace of the Mourner." Innumerable testimonies might be adduced in corroboration of her assertion, drawn from the experience of individuals of every rank, whose soul-cheering hopes have been eternally realized! We select but one instance, but that one is a host in itself. The suffering and bereaved Lady Rachael Russel thus writes: "I think the man a bad reasoner that, to do well, must take with indifference whatever happens to him. It is very fine to say, Why should we complain? *that* is taken away, which was lent to us but for a time we know, &c. They are the receipts of philosophers I have no reverence for, as I have not for any *thing which is* unnatural. It is not sincere;

and I dare say they did dissemble, and *felt* what they would not own. I know I cannot dispute with Almighty power, but yet, if my delight is gone, I must needs be sorry it is taken away, according to the measure it made me glad. The *Christian* religion, believe me, *has alone the power* to make the *spirit easy under great calamity*. Nothing less than the hope of being again made happy, can satisfy the mind. I am sure I owe more to it than I could have done to the world, if all the glories of it had been offered to me." Such is the testimony of one who was tried in the fierce furnace of affliction, and came forth as gold! Mark her further profession of the power of faith and love: "I trust I have acquired a perfect submission to my lot, attended by the constant conviction that it is the *best for me*. How many and how various are the thoughts of a troubled mind, but let no murmuring intrude. There will come a day when I shall be satisfied that God in mercy, as well as justice, has appointed *my lot.*" *Thus* a *lively* faith in the wisdom, the

truth, and the goodness of God, as a beam of heavenly fire, enlightens the mind to perceive the beauty, the design, and the order of the divine dispensations, and enables the soul to rejoice even in tribulation; for if it bringeth forth fruit unto holiness, the word of inspiration informs us, "the end shall be everlasting life."

> If, holy Faith, no comforts sure were thine,
> No promised glories of a world divine;
> If on no wounded heart Religion threw
> The healing balm of heaven's refreshing dew,
> What charm could bid th' immortal spirit rest,
> Or longer hold its bondage in the breast;
> Bow to the thraldom, prison'd in a clod,
> And mourn in partial exile from its God?
>
> STEWART.—*Poem, Resurrection.*

But, blessed be God, "we follow not cunningly devised fables; we know in whom (we) have believed, and (are) persuaded that he is able to keep that which (we) have committed unto him against that day." This God, this faithful God, is the object of a Christian's hope, and eternal life is eagerly expected, *because God is there to be finally* enjoyed. Which hope we have

as the anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; that is, this hope terminates in God; and it is this hope that endears to the mourner the precious volume which reveals to us the foundation of it; which elevates the soul beyond the anxious cares of earth, and leads it to consecrate all its powers to the glory of redeeming love. The language of a heart thus filled with a hope of heaven will be, when suffering the chastening of the Father of mercies, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the help of my countenance and my God."

THE

MOURNER'S SOLACE.

GRIEF.

If wisdom is our lesson, (and what else
Ennobles man, what else have angels learn'd?)
Grief! more proficients in thy school are made
Than genius or proud learning ere could boast.

YOUNG.

MUCH has been said upon the subject of grief, but how little to the purpose! It cannot be described by those who have not felt it deeply; and those who have, are too much agitated at the time of its extreme violence to define its fearful influence: and when in a degree freed from the intensity of the agony, find the retrospection too painful to *admit of analization.* The descriptions that

we have of grief are therefore more poetical and fancied than natural. It is represented as exhausting itself in complaint; but real grief silently endures, until its dreadful energy is abated. Silence is the natural expression of that awful and overwhelming sensation which presses on the soul in the moment of bereavement.

Every description in the volume of Inspiration is true to nature: thus Job sat still seven days and seven nights ere he bewailed his afflictions; and the only kindness he seems to have received from his friends was their permitting him to remain undisturbed. "So they sat with him seven days and seven nights, and none spake a word unto him, for they saw that his grief was very great."—(Job, ii. 13.) In fact, there is no feeling of our nature more reserved than grief, if deeply felt, or one which more sedulously seeks to hide itself when in society, although it is continually betrayed by the rising sigh and changing countenance. It shrinks as it were from premature consolation, feeling that it is *but the rem*embrancer of the blow which has

touched the nerve "whence agony is born," and regarding it as a violation of the sacredness of sorrow. How often does the bereaved sufferer prove the justness of those beautiful lines of the gifted bard :—

> There is a mystery in *parting words*,
> A spell which sweeps affection's deepest chords,
> And oft when least expected makes us start
> At that Æolian music of the heart.
>
> HANKINSON, JACOB.—*Prize Poem.*

Grief is also described as delighting itself in solitude. It will seek solitude, of course, to indulge without restraint its melancholy meditations; but to the mind dreadfully burdened solitude will become insupportable, unless cheered by religious principle; and would, if continued, inevitably be followed by death, natural or self-sought; because the genial fires glowing in the bosom of the individual, which hitherto cherished the endeared and lamented objects of his love, now consume his own vitality, and he sinks under the power of those harassing suggestions which have *a tendency to* render him dissatisfied

with the appointments of his Creator; while the abandonment of the mind to any one particular object by which an intense and prolonged feeling of uneasiness is awakened, has equally a tendency to enfeeble its powers and to destroy ultimately the very capacity of sober thought and useful action. Grief is also interpreted by the countenance and demeanour, but these are not always just criteria. The man who forces himself to be cheerful when in society, may appear to an ill-judging world deficient even in feeling; yet, perhaps the moment after he has quitted the company who have passed this judgment, he may relapse into bitter sorrow and dreadful mental agony.

It is freely admitted that real cheerfulness may not unfrequently flash over the mind oppressed and darkened by the clouds of sorrow, for the human soul has a tendency to rise above the weight which depresses it.

Strange tho' it seem, yet with extremest grief
Is linked a mirth. It doth not bring relief:
That playfulness of sorrow ne'er beguiles.

BYRON.

In these moments the grief and melancholy that rankle about the heart are unseen and unsuspected by others, who may even fondly imagine that the sorrows of the afflicted one are at least in a degree dispelled.

Alas! they imagine not the agonies which wait his retirement, or the thorns which strew his pillow! Most certainly these gleamings of vivacity are perfectly compatible with profound grief and great mental suffering: it is the result of an extreme sensibility of mind, apt to be strongly impressed by its situation, and overpowered by the feelings which that situation excites.

That gaiety and playfulness of deportment which is sometimes observed in individuals known to have cause of melancholy, is in fact no *inconsistency* of character.

That sort of melancholy which is the most genuine as well as the most amiable of any, neither arising from natural gloominess of temper nor prompted by accidental chagrin, but the effect of delicate sensibility impressed with a sense of sorrow, or a feeling of its own weakness, will frequently be found indulging itself in *a transient* sportiveness of external

behaviour, amidst the pressure of a sad, or even the anguish of a broken heart. We may ascribe this constitution of our nature to the beneficient ordination of our Creator, who thus causing a "pause in grief," strengthens the spirit to bear its pressure, before it has power to call in higher aids. There is a time to weep, there is a time to mourn; nature must have her tribute, and religion asks nothing contrary to it.

"Oh, there are tender ties
Close twisted with the fibres of the heart,
Which broken break them, and drive off the soul
Of human joy, and make it pain to live."

It is permitted us to weep when these tender ties are severed: but there is a sorrow of the world which "worketh death;" let us beware lest it gain the dominion, and hide from us our privileges, our sources, our resources, and neutralize our principles.

It may surely then be safely asserted, that complaint, great love of solitude, melancholy countenance and air, are *not* the invariable *characters of* grief; but there is a mark which *not only indicates* its existence, but which

constitutes its undeviating characteristic. This is the love of change, an unceasing restlessness, which forbids repose in any place, in any situation, or any employment. A total incapacity of application or of thought, save upon the one absorbing idea, which, depressing as it is, has something in it so fascinating that the mind subjected to its influence is arrested and absorbed as it were in the contemplation of its cause. The good of which the individual is deprived is perhaps now only appreciated according to its value; and it is this contemplation of qualities which once gave delight, or which were fondly expected to give delight, which mingles a sacred pleasure with the anguish of privation. Two other positions respecting grief appear equally erroneous as those already alluded to.

They are these:—That grief should be amused, and that the lost object should never be mentioned or recalled to the attention of the mourner:

"Oh, they may talk, but let th' assertors learn,
There is a solemn luxury in grief,
Which *they may never* taste, well known to those
Who heave the sigh sincerely. Religion there

Waits the fit moment, and when time has calm'd
The first o'erwhelming tempest of their woe,
Piteous she steals upon the mourner's breast
Her precious balm to shed! O it *has* power,
Has sovereign power to soften and to soothe,
Thus duly ministered."

To amuse by dissipation is a vain, if not a cruel attempt to relieve the oppressed spirit. The contrast of external gaiety to the internal torture and perturbation of soul is too strong —too violent. It cannot fail to add to, rather than diminish the anguish of the sufferer. No: gentle and soothing society, pious, cheerful, but not gay, friendly but not officious and troublesome, consistent but not dictatorial, is the best human alleviation granted by the great Disposer in the hour of human trial, and in proportion as it is more or less imbued with the spirit of Him who sought out and shared in human woe, will be the degree of comfort derived from such society; for by its constraining influence, the heart may be gently opened to receive the spirit of rich consolation flowing from the exhaustless fountain *of* God's love and grace.

But we are not to speak at present of the

remedies which mere earth affords for the sorrows to which man is born, or rather those to which rebellion against his Creator has rendered him liable. We contemn not, we undervalue not the alleviations flowing from sympathy, as far as they extend,

> " For we have known what sweet relief
> E'en *powerless pity yields to grief.*"

But yet there are perhaps few but have experienced in the hour of calamity, when the chastening hand of God is stretched forth, that the dearest friends can prove but miserable comforters. They cannot raise the fainting heart, they cannot satisfy the longing soul, they cannot revive such as sit in darkness and the shadow of death. A stronger arm than that of man is required to support, a power mightier than that of man must give command to the trembling soul—" Peace, be still."

Such are a very few of the mistaken notions concerning the true solace of grief, and the deficiency of judgment in the time and mode of application.

How often is the man labouring under the pressure of heavy affliction mortified and irritated, by the foolish evasions to his wishes to turn the conversation to the subject of his grief, so practised by well-meaning but most ill-judging friends; when on the contrary, if they would listen to his effusions when inclined to confidence, bear affectionately with his excess of feeling, and endeavour at intervals, as it were incidentally, to turn the conversation to the cheering and animating spirit of religion and revelation, the mind, under the blessing of God on the endeavour, would far sooner recover its calmness and tranquillity than if suffered to brood upon the afflicting visitation of heaven; for by being thwarted in its confidence the mind becomes irritated, and preys injuriously upon itself.

Business is a remedy often recommended; and it has its aids, like others of a transient and terrestrial nature, to relieve, by suspending for awhile the agony of grief: but it possesses no permanent efficacy; for business, although it may distract or *occupy the* attention for a time, is a miserable

toil to him whose mind grief has enervated, so as even the grasshopper is become a burden; and at the termination of the excitement, the grief recoils with redoubled force on a soul previously borne down by labour and fatigue.

It may be enquired, Is there then no remedy for grief? Is there no solace for human woe? Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician there? We may boldly reply, that for the internal conflict excited by the influence of grief, *no* reliance can be placed on an arm of flesh, or any of the powers of which man is possessed even in their maturest growth. Inquire of a man's talents, be they ever so superior, inquire if they possess a balm effectually to heal the wounds of the bereaved heart? They answer, "It is not with us." Ask of human attainments, be they ever so rich and varied, they reply, "Seek it not with us." Ask of the understanding however vigorous, and it pronounces, "We have sought it throughout all science in the world and found it not." Thus all terrestrial *sources fail. But* there is yet a remedy, a

never-failing remedy for sorrow, an assured antidote for every grief; and this we may with confidence assert is contained in the spirit of those blessed and encouraging words, "When I am in heaviness I will think upon God." (Psalm lxxviii.)

To illustrate this, will form the subject of the ensuing pages: and may God, from whom cometh all consolation and every good and perfect gift, vouchsafe his blessing to the humble endeavour, so that the *mourner* may exchange the spirit of heaviness for the spirit of holy joy!

"Say, why was man so eminently rais'd
Amid the vast creation, why empower'd
Through life and death to dart his watchful eye
With thoughts beyond the limits of his frame,
But that th' Omnipotent might send him forth,—
Might send him forth the sov'reign good to learn,
To chase each meaner purpose from the breast,
And through the mists of passion and of sense,
And through the pelting *storms of grief and pain*
To hold straight on, with constant heart, and eye
Still fix'd upon his everlasting palm,
Th' approving smile of Heaven? Else wherefore
burns

In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,
That seeks from day to day sublimer ends,
Happy though restless? Why departs the soul
Wide from the track and journey of her times
To grasp the good she knows not?
Are they not pledges of eternal Being?"

RESURRECTION.

Man's immortality alone can solve
The darkest of enigmas—human hope:
Of all the darkest, if at death we die.

YOUNG.—*Night 7th*, 104.

"BUT now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." This is the grand key-stone of the indestructible arch on which the beautiful structure of our hopes, our happiness, and our consolations is founded firm as the eternal Word itself! We might dwell upon the infinite importance of the doctrine, as to its general influence upon society—we might expatiate on its evidences from reason, from analogy, and from Scripture; but as it is not our intention or design either to argue with the sceptic, or to *invade the* province of the moral legislator,

it may suffice to say, that the arguments in favour of both are abundant and incontrovertible.

Assuming it then as an established principle, we shall confine ourselves to reminding our fellow-mourners of the rich consolations it contains for the hours of calamity, bereavement, and death!

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away!" Yes, "there is a spirit in man," interwoven with the vitals of every human frame—there is a principle, however obscured by the grossness or the debility of its present organs, however torpid or inactive by the pressure of infirmity, however distracted and debased by the opposition of flesh and spirit,—which shall continue stable and immovable when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the pillars of the earth and its basis shaken, the heavens shall be *rolled together as a* scroll and pass away!

Under all these awful, these terrific, and supernatural circumstances, how glorious and consolatory is the thought that the *human soul* shall be seen fresh, vigorous, and glowing with the glad anticipation of the glory that shall be revealed, soaring far above the wreck of the universe, and uniting for ever with kindred spirits in the realms of eternity!

"I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, From henceforth blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours." What an infinite value does even this one consideration afford to a rational and immortal spirit, ask those whose dearest friends are dying around them, and themselves passing into eternity!

How precious must that be in the idea of every human being, which involves all the enjoyment and happiness of which he is graciously made capable! On the *soul* alone depend all present possession and all future expectation:—the life that now is, and that *which is to* come; the pleasures of the pre-

sent, and the anticipations of hope; the shadows of time, and the realities of eternity, whatever God bestows or man receives.

And this soul is *immortal!*

"Immortal! ages pass'd and nothing gone!
Morn without eve! a race without a goal!
Unshorten'd by progression, infinite;
Futurity for ever future."

What shall be the modes of our spiritual being in a separate and eternal state it is not necessary for us to know; these we must die to learn: but we know from that word which is truth, that when Christ who is our life shall appear, then also those who believe in him and obey him shall be with him to behold his glory.

One thing is clear,—man is "a living soul;" and the volume of inspiration makes known to us all that is necessary for our present encouragement and future hope as to our final destination: "This mortal shall put on immortality." "The inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding." Let us then earnestly *pray that our hearts* may be opened to receive

the light he is ever willing to impart: let us pray that he who sendeth forth the sun in his might, he who enkindleth the stars of heaven, he who bestoweth natural and intellectual life upon man,—let us pray that he would graciously pour spiritual knowledge into our minds, that we may contemplate with joy and consolation the unbounded prospects of futurity! and with the eye of faith unclouded, and hope unwavering, behold the glorious spirits of the redeemed bending in lowly adoration before the throne of the Almighty Father "which was, which is, and which is to come, from everlasting to everlasting."

But above all other consolations arising from this sublime assurance, is this—that the immaterial principle is destined for the enjoyment of God, its creator and sanctifier. It is *in* Him and *through* Him and *by* Him that we shall taste the eternal felicity of reunion with those we loved on earth. "Brethren, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not *yet* appear what we shall be; but we know that when he *who is our life* shall appear, we shall be made

like him, for we shall see him as he is and appear with him in glory." The redeemed pass before the vision of our faith, and a voice from heaven proclaims, "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them to living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Oh! when we contemplate the consoling and delightful subject of our assured resurrection from the grave, when the turf that covers our dead becomes an altar before which we may kneel to commend our own spirits to the Great Being before whom our departed friends live, and whose power will soon reunite the ties He in wisdom has severed awhile, how cheered is the prospect, and how truly may we say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The very spirit of consolation breathes in the assurance that our faded forms of mortality *shall not be forgotten* by our God; that the

corruptible shall become incorruptible; the dishonoured, glorious; the feeble, powerful; and the natural, spiritual; that death shall be swallowed up in victory. Oh! that we may thankfully acknowledge the inestimable value of that holy volume by which these sublime discoveries are disclosed to us. Let us remember that there was a time when the conscious heart of man vibrated with the palpitations of fearful anticipation and suspense, as he descended "the valley of the shadow of death;" for Revelation was not there to guide and to support his trembling and uncertain steps, and a darkness which might be felt oppressed and overwhelmed the departing spirit:—

Ah, not for them had Mercy's tranquil ray
Chas'd the dark horrors of the grave away;
No rude-carv'd record o'er the hillock's breast
Told the *bright hope* that sooth'd the slumb'rer's rest;
No spring flowers budding from the fun'ral ground
Whisper'd their still "resurgam" all around;
But one cold shroud of unrelenting gloom,
Curtain'd the silent chambers of the tomb.

WHYTHEAD.—St. John's College.

Blessed be the hand which has dispelled the cloud from the mouth of the grave, and for ever chased the horrors that encompassed it! Blessed, thrice blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we may now approach that awful hour, assured that he, the friend of sinners, is with us, and through him death is swallowed up in victory. He will ransom us from the grave. Through the gospel, truly styled "good tidings," life and immortality are brought to light, full, clear, unclouded light. Now all is plain to those who wilfully close not their eyes to the refulgency. The imperishable record is ours, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

In this blessed volume the riches of all spiritual blessings are disclosed. It places them within the reach of every human being, and sweetly, powerfully, impressively instructs us how we may possess them. Shall we not then continually study it as the very transcript of God's will, the gracious message of his transcending love—the great

charter of our privileges, and the bright pledge of our Immortality?

To the affecting purposes of Christian solace and encouragement, how applicable is this grand doctrine of the resurrection! It is through much tribulation that we must enter the kingdom of God. Temptations, sufferings, bereavements, constantly attend us:

"Dark e'en at noon-tide is our mortal sphere;"

and there are none but must have cause to confess with the afflicted patriarch, "I know that thou wilt bring me to death and to the house appointed for all living." But He who wounds has also conferred blessings for our comfort and peace, even in the midst of desolation, in granting us the prospect of renewed and perpetuated life. This can irradiate with joy even the darkest earthly lot. O Lamb of God, suffering Redeemer! who humblest thyself to earth for us sinners, who died to redeem the lost, infuse thy patient spirit into our hearts; let us have peace in thee, whether in tribulation, sorrow, anguish, or bereavement

here below: enable us, O compassionate Saviour, meekly to take up every cross, and hope to the end for the grace which thou hast promised at thy final revelation. Most assuredly it is from the hope of a future reunion that we may draw strong consolation for the present loss of our friends and relations.

Death is one of those tribulations to which we and all who are dear to us must submit. Death will one day divide us: we must be parted from the objects of our tenderest affection. It may, perhaps, be suggested to us, that they who are taken away from us are *happy*, that they are with the Lord. But we know from experience that love is stronger than death, and resists whatever threatens to extinguish it; we feel the bitterness of this parting, and we who survive lament and mourn.

Yet if the friend, the parent, the brother, the child, who seems to be snatched away from us for ever, is only gone a little before us; if this death be a short interval, preceding an eternal reunion, if amidst our dejection of mind, *faith and reason* jointly assure us,

"Cease, O bereaved one, to look at outward appearances! He who is now taken away shall one day be restored to thee,"—what comfort is here for the wounded heart! Then, in the several relations we have named, it may be said, death hath only divided us for a short time. I will not be sorry like those who have no hope. "Wilt thou not revive us again, O Lord, that thy (children) may rejoice in thee?" Let us then, in all our trials, comfort one another with these words—that we shall be *together* with the Lord.

"Say, Power Supreme! shall those on earth we love
Nor feel, nor know the intercourse above?
Shall all those hopes that swell the heart the while
Not meet in heaven the transport of a smile?
Shall the dear friends in memory's page that dwell
Not hear we linger'd o'er their narrow cell?
Say, shall no more our scenes of youth be dear—
Lost, the fine link of sweet communion here?
Shall all the buds of op'ning life that blew
In Hope's fair garden, and in Fancy's dew,
No more the smile of fond remembrance claim,
And picture hours of innocence the same?
Shall we not then each well lov'd feature trace,
The smile recal, and share the fond embrace?

Yes! as the sailor, who by tempests tost
On some lone coast, survives his shipmates lost,
Spreads for his native home once more the sail
That swells exulting in the favouring gale,
And joyful strains (the rising shore in view)
To catch each object to remembrance true;
So in that last, that great decisive hour,
When the new form assumes angelic power,
In rank celestial though the virtuous shine,
'Mid radiant bands transcendant and divine,
Still may they know the friends on earth they
knew,
And souls unite that there engrafted grew!

Great Lord of life! whose voice to roseate bloom
Shall wake the form long wither'd in the tomb,
O give salvation's star our course to light
Through all the dangers of this mortal night;
And when the vaunts of Death and Time expire,
As life rekindles with immortal fire
In resurrection's morn, for us to shine
And gild with rays of peace the mercy-seat divine!"

STEWART,—*Resurrection.*

——"O Thou whose lonely contemplation trod
Gethsemane and Tabor, there to pray,
And in communion see the face of God,
Let us *not linger in this* house of clay

Without Thy visitation,—and the ray
That from between the cherubim of light
Illumes the path from darkness into day,
Nor only guides, but strengthens for the flight
The spirit that aspires where Thou and heaven
invite.

Age, grief, infirmity have yet a calm
That brings the servant nearer to the feet
Of Him who shall award the crown and palm,
When with his angels to the mercy-seat
He comes, and all earth's generations meet
Messiah—generations of the *dead.*
While worlds to worlds the jubilee repeat
Of saints in triumph to their kingdom led,
Jehovah their defence, Immanuel their head!

Rejoice, disciple of the Lord, in loss,
In grief, in age, in tribulation blest;
More closely to thy bosom press the cross,
And *thankfully* acknowledge *all is best*
As Providence hath ordered, whose behest,
Then most benign when seeming most severe,
Protects us from ourselves, nor offers rest
Till Time dissolving in th' eternal year
Proclaims our full repose from sorrow, sin, and
fear.

Our days are register'd, and ev'ry hour
Gives warning:—not a moment ever roll'd

Without a testimonial to that Power
That spread abroad the firmament of old,
Appointed summer's heat, and winter's cold,
The fruits of autumn, and the bloom of spring,
Call'd forth the sun, the stars by number told,
And bade all ages, all creation sing
The constellations' birth—the glory of their King.

Behold how Nature's volume is to all
Laid open—there the record to peruse
Of Him by whom earth's kingdoms rise and fall,
The seasons change, the clouds distil their dews,
The garden and the mead display their hues.
The sky's illimitable circuit feels
His guidance, and the destined course pursues,
And day by day and night by night reveals
What hand each insect feeds, each star and planet wields.

Then turn not from the melodies of morn,
In cold abstraction, nor refuse to hear
The early echoes, of that sweet season born,
Blend with the list'ning breeze so pure and clear.
No, let them wake devotion to revere
The Giver of all good! and pay her vow,
When first day's eyelid opens on the sphere
Terrestrial, and transfigures all below,
Till fair as Paradise, earth, ocean, ether glow!

Nor *may we pass the* mystery of noon

Unsolemnized—*Then* was the *ransom paid*
That purchas'd for the world salvation's boon;
Then trembled earth, the sun retired dismay'd,
The vault of heaven was wrapp'd in deepest shade,
And height and depth convuls'd, the signal gave
How high the victim that atoned for man—
E'en Him who quell'd the whirlwind and the wave,
Death overcame, its sting, the serpent, and the grave.

But morning and the noon of life are fled,
And glooms of eve to sadder musing call,
Ere night prepare the pillow for the head
On that sepulchral couch ordain'd for all
Earth's progeny, that soon or later fall
Like wither'd leaf.—Yet though we seem to die,
Though dissolution and decay enthral
Our mortal frame, the soul shall upward fly
Ever from strength to strength to meet its God on high."

Extract from Poem to Bishop Kenn, by Mr. Hoyle, contained in Bowles' Life of Kenn.

"O grant to me, indulgent Heaven,
Grant me with trembling and with awe
To use each earthly blessing given,
And using, own thy Wisdom's law:

Own that each joy I feel or know
Is partner to another's woe.
I smile amid lament;
And as Time's restless wheel goes round,
My turn for sorrow must be found
My hour of trial sent.

O, when Thou givest, give, I pray,
A heart awake to future ill;
And when thou lackest, take away
Each feeling rebel to Thy will.
Humble in joy, for joy will fly,
Patient in woe, for woe will die,
To every lot resign'd;
So let me view life's gleaming scene,
Still warn of woe behind."

INCHBALD.

THE EVER-PRESENT GOD.

"God is a very present help in time of trouble."

WHAT a spring of soul-cheering comfort is contained in the thought, that the presence of God accompanies us in all our afflictions! "It is the Lord that killeth, and the Lord that maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away." "Happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, for he maketh sore and bindeth up; he woundeth, and his hands make whole." The same Almighty Being has declared, "I dwell in the high and holy place, and with him also that is of a humble and contrite spirit."

"Fear thou not," he says to the afflicted, "for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I *am thy God;* I will strengthen thee, yea, I

will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee, with the right hand of my righteousness." "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee."

How replete with consolation to the afflicted and sorrow-stricken are these divine promises; how calculated to sustain the spirit, and to impress them of the truth and power of their God! And let us recollect, that these are the promises of an immutable Being, in whom is no variableness, nor shadow of turning; that He is, moreover, the Father of mercies. Mark the tender appellation; and consider, that the Almighty not only announces himself a Father in name, but is such in verity and power, to all afflicted souls who seek Him in sincerity.

The Father of mercies! How endearing the title! The eternal fountain of all tenderness and affection; the God of all comfort! because He overflows with eternal and infinite comforts. Hence it follows, that there is no affliction can visit the children of God, so *great but He has* comforts superior to im-

part, in the gracious promises of His Holy Word. "Whatsoever things were written, were written for our learning, that we through the scriptures might have hope."—(Rom. xv. 4.) The Almighty styles himself the fountain of living waters. Let us not think that the fountain of sin and death more abounds with afflictions, than the fountain of life does with comforts.

To reflect on these sources of supreme goodness and comfort, infuses a sweet *patience* into the soul. This kind and gentle comforter, whose mild voice becalms our perturbed spirits, and bids the tumult of passion be still, is never distant when trouble is near. It pledges for our security His declarations, who cannot deceive. It shows that our faith and our hope are alike founded on divine veracity and faithfulness. It refers to the immutability of the Almighty Disposer for a complete answer to all the surmises of inquietude. Here it rests, as on a foundation solid and durable as the basis which sustains the universe. Associated with this conviction, the soul shall *triumph* over all the concomitants of bereave-

ment, misfortune, and contingency. For, inspired by a lively faith and a firm patience, the one to believe, and the other to wait upon God, what, on this side the grave, can be an object of terror, or on the other, does not fill us with hope? Whatever be the final issue of all things, our real happiness cannot be frustrated.

To the ultimate result of true holiness, connected with a well-established faith in the immutability of God, the afflicted may resort in every extremity as to a strong hold, as stable and substantial as the throne of heaven! And what "in life or death, things present or things to come," can shake his confidence, or defeat his hope, who lives, suffers, and acts in full assurance, "that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?"

Heaven and earth are interested in the happiness of him whose mind grace has thus formed and composed. He may be troubled, but cannot be cast down. Distress in all its angriest forms, like a mighty tempest raging around, *may awhile perturb his* spirit; but possessing

his soul in patience, he resigns himself to heaven, and to heaven commits, in perfect and tranquil confidence, the keeping of all his concerns.

Oh! this is the faith which rests entirely on the paternal affection of the God of all consolation. This is that faith which through Christ Jesus overcometh sin, death, the world, and all its afflictions, temptations, and trials. For "all things are possible to him that believeth: and he that believeth shall see the glory of God."

But let us ever remember, that no one can partake of these consolations without the prayer of faith, humility, and sincerity: "for all these things," saith God, "I will be inquired of." And, oh! what a privilege to be allowed to approach the mercy-seat, and to hold divine communion with our God! The heart which perhaps would shrink from disclosing its sorrows to mortal friend, however sympathetic, finds itself refreshed and comforted by pouring them out before God in prayer! One well experienced in grief, has said, "When I called *upon thee,* thou heardest me, and renewedst

my soul with much strength." The prayer of the afflicted, offered up in the name of the great Mediator, elevates the soul to heaven; and the angel of divine consolation responds to the appeal; for we may assure ourselves, that if we pray according to His will, who heareth and answereth prayer, we shall be strengthened, comforted, and sustained, according to His gracious promises.

"They that trust in the Lord shall be even as the Mount Sion: as the hills stand about Jerusalem, even so standeth the Lord round about his people."

When affliction removes every thing else from us, God, the eternal God, the Creator, the Redeemer, the Comforter, the Sanctifier, abides ever with us.

Nay, affliction is so far from separating God from us, it rather brings us to God, and God to us; for when we are weak then He is strong. He despiseth not our weak faith, nor rejects it, however feeble, but cherishes, strengthens, and, if we forsake not our own privileges, will at last crown it with a blessed conclusion. Mark *the golden passages*:—"Thou hast been

a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat," (Isaiah, xxxv. 4.) "Strengthen ye the weak hands, confirm the feeble knees; say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not, behold your God will come and save you," (Isaiah, xxxv. 3, 4.) "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength," (Isaiah, xl. 29, 31.) "The Lord hath sent me to preach good things to the meek, to bind up the broken-hearted, and to comfort all that mourn," (Isaiah, lxi. 1.) Let us also continually seek comfort, in the assurance, that in the midst of our greatest infirmities and deepest afflictions, if we but breathe the wish to possess the presence of our compassionate Redeemer, He will manifest himself to our drooping soul.

Has he not said, "In all places where there is a remembrance of my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee?" Let us then, when weak in faith, look up to Christ Jesus our Redeemer and merciful High-*priest, who is* still interceding that our faith

may be strengthened, as he did for St. Peter: "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." How rich is the consolation derived from the assurance, that "we have not an high-priest that cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted like as we are, but without sin, who is at the right-hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Seeing then, that we have such great and precious promises of aid, strength, and consolation, let us meet every affliction in the spirit of patient and humble acquiescence; look up steadfastly to God, the everlasting fountain and giver of all goodness; and embrace every dispensation of Providence (of what nature soever) as our only happiness, and in every condition of soul and body learn to rejoice in God alone.

If we are content to follow the example of our blessed Lord, to drink the wine mingled with gall, we have assurance that we shall hereafter sit down with him in the kingdom of heaven. Let us be content to bear his cross, and *we may hope to be* partakers of his glory.

Let us fly to Him; from Him alone expect help, comfort, and peace. Let us support ourselves under the conflict with the abounding and comfortable promises of Jesus our Saviour, that in due time we may conquer, if we faint not. He tells us to "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." Let us not then faint under tribulation, but patiently bear the chastening of the Lord, till the Sun of Righteousness again arises with healing and consolation on his wings. For "There springeth up a light for the righteous, and joyful gladness for such as are true of heart." And, oh! let us ever remember that it is the high privilege of the true believer to have a sure asylum in God. How inconceivably valuable is this, when the clouds of trouble envelope us! Not only because it offers relief when all other sources of comfort fail or forsake us, but because the support we derive from it is beyond the influence of the world, for with our peace and joy in God, no man can intermeddle. In bitterness of soul, to whom indeed should we go, but to the Father of mercies, to pour out our souls in prayer, to ex-

press our sorrows, and to implore his compassionate help? and for our everlasting comfort, we shall, while thus engaged in communion with our Creator, enjoy a persuasion of the Divine faithfulness. Thus shall the soul patiently wait, even if the fulfilment of the prayers we offer be long delayed; for, if we ask in faith, we shall be satisfied, that in the due appointed season, the God of wisdom and goodness will perform what he has spoken, and our anticipations will not be vain.

Of this we may be assured, that the effusions of a grief-worn soul, though inaudible, fail not to plead effectually with a compassionate God and Father, who afflicts not willingly. When, therefore, we implore a blessing from Him, let us patiently abide *his* time for a suitable answer, comforting ourselves with the consideration, that, although His providence is often to us mysterious, it is whenever in any instance unfolded to us, fraught with causes of admiration and praise. It is surely to exercise our faith and patience that the Almighty has veiled his conduct in *partial obscurity*; and we are sometimes re-

quired to wait long and anxiously for the cloud to be dispersed. But when we consider how ready, how willing, how powerful he is to impart to us all we need or can desire, we have every ground of encouragement and patient hope to put unreserved trust in Him. Happy therefore, most happy are those who without repining or doubt are enabled to submit to present dispensations, waiting their concealed and suspended issue, but confidently expecting it *will be good.*

"Let us then run with patience the race that is set before us; looking unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith; for although no chastening seemeth, for the present, to be joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, afterward, it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them who are exercised thereby. Wherefore lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees."—(Heb. xii. 1, 2, 11, 12.) "Cast not away your confidence," saith the apostle, "which hath great recompence of reward."—(Heb. x. 35.) "For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done (or suf*fered) the* will of God, ye might receive the

promise. For yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." Oh, let us not sink or despond, even if we are called to "endure a great fight of afflictions;" remembering the words of inspiration, which, while they breathe of all consolation, have also declared "The just shall live by faith; but, if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him."—(Heb. x. 38.)

"Oh, shall frail man Heaven's dread decree gainsay,
Which bade the series of events extend
Wide through unnumber'd worlds, and ages without end?
One part, one little part, we dimly scan,
Through the dark medium of life's feverish dream,
Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
If but that little part incongruous seem;
Nor is that part, perhaps, what mortals deem.
Oft from apparent ill our blessings rise,
O, then renounce that impious self-esteem,
That aims to trace the secrets of the skies,
For thou art but of dust: be humble, and be wise."

BEATTIE'S MINSTREL.

THE PILGRIM OF EARTH.

"They confessed they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."—Heb. xi. 13.

THOUGH sunless, moonless, starless, seem
The sufferer's lonely state,
There is a light, whose cheering beam
Its gloom can dissipate.
It comes with healing on its wings,
And heavenly radiance round it flings.

It rises on the darken'd mind,
In lustre brighter, far,
Than that to outward orb assign'd,
Of sun, or moon, or star.
And matchless is its mild controul
Over the desolate of soul.

There is a Friend, more tender, true,
Than brother ere can be,
Who, when all others bid adieu,
Remains, the last to flee;
Who, be their pathway bright or dim,
Deserts not those who turn to Him!

The heart by Him sustain'd, though deep
  Its anguish, still can bear:
The soul He condescends to keep,
  Shall never know despair:
In nature's weakness, sorrow's night,
God is its strength, its joy, its light.

He is the Friend who changeth not,
  In sickness or in health;
Whether on earth our transient lot
  Be poverty or wealth.
In joy or grief, contempt or fame,
To all who seek Him, still the same.

Of human hearts He holds the key,
  Is friendship meet for ours?
O be assured that none but He
  Unlocks its purest powers:
He can recal the lost—the dead—
Or give us nobler in their stead.

Of earthly friends, who finds them true
  May boast a happy lot;
But happier still, life's journey through,
  Is he who needs them not.
A heavenly Friend, to know we need,
To *feel we* have, is bliss indeed.

B. BARTON.

ASPIRATIONS.

SUPPORT me, O Lord, my God, by thy heavenly grace, and uphold me by thy Holy Spirit, till my faith prove the "victory that overcometh the world!"

O Jesus, enlighten me with the brightness of thine eternal light, and chase all darkness from my soul.

Shower down thy consoling grace from above, and shed thy heavenly dew into my heart.

O unite my soul to Thee, for thou only, O Lord, art sufficient for the soul that loveth Thee.

O that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for.

The arrows of the Almighty are in me, *the poison* whereof drinketh up my spirit.

The terrors of God do set themselves in array against me.

Teach me, and I will be silent, and cause me to understand wherein I have erred.

Behold He taketh away, who can hinder him? Who will say unto him, What doest thou? How much less shall I answer him, and choose out my words to reason with him?

Whom though I was righteous, yet would I not answer, but I would make supplication to my Judge.

And now my soul is poured out upon me, the days of affliction have taken hold upon me.

I know, O Lord, thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living. Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee: I will lay my hand upon my mouth. I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, make thou mine eye to see Thee!

PRAYER IN AFFLICTION.

O God, who commandest when we are in trouble to open our hearts and to tell out our sorrows to Thee in prayer, and dost promise to listen with compassion to our supplications, give me grace to approach Thee, that I offend not in word or thought. Put away from me, every impatient imagination, prevent every unworthy petition; let not my prayers assume the language of complaint, nor my sorrows the character of despair. Upon the multitude of thy mercies, O God, I repose my grief, as I rest my hope; and whether it shall seem fit to remove the calamity with which I am afflicted, or still to suspend it over me, dispose me, under every dispensation of thy will, patiently to adore thy inscrutable Providence, and to bless Thy holy name for ever and ever. This supplication I humbly offer, through the adorable Saviour, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*—(*Form for* Fast-Day.)

THE

MOURNER'S REMEMBRANCER.

In devotion, as well as every other mental exercise, we require materials for thinking, and from various causes are not at all times able to call up our resources when we most need them. We need also to be continually reminded of our own principles.

1st. Remember, if you be cast down, it is not for want of great and precious promises, but your deficiency of faith in applying them. Pray that God may increase your faith, and perfect you in love.

2nd. Like the flower which is cut off by the nipping blast, or scorched by the meridian sun, your earthly felicity may no more bloom; yet remember, that the hope of glory, though now in the bud, will finally blossom never to fade away. When transplanted into the paradise of God, the change will prove the sweeter by or from *what we* suffer here.

3rd. He that believeth shall not make haste (be impatient.) We must wait: let Him do what seemeth to Him good.

4th. We are never so happy as when we are blest with what we may term a holy carelessness. This is right: leave it with Him who is always careful of us—He is faithful: can he alter? No. He is love, mercy, and peace: can He change? No. Is not the merit and efficacy of his death the same now as ever? Yes. Is not the Eternal Father well pleased with it? Yes. Have we any other hope, refuge, or hiding place? No; nor none other can we want.

5th. When we are tempted to arraign the dispensations of Providence, we should recollect that eternity is to be taken into our calculation. In a mixt state like the present, we indeed behold the tears of the oppressed, and that they have no comforter; and hence, perhaps, our faith may waver: nor can we discern or determine, from the outward circumstances of men, concerning any degree of

moral good or evil under the sun. There is no end of reasoning upon the subject; it comes not within the range of finite capacity. Happy is he who keeps simply to the Bible; the difficulty is therein solved. "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

6th. I see the worldling flourish like a tree planted by the water-side, and his leaf doth not wither!

But, is the fruit of happiness brought forth in due season?

7th. Let no man presume that he can see prospectively into the ways of Providence! His part is to contemplate them in the past, and trust them for the future; but so trusting, to act always upon motives of human prudence directed by religious principles.—*Southey's Colloquies*, vol. ii. p. 41.

8th. *The day of the Lord's coming.*—Of that day and hour, O great Restorer of our joys, we *know not.* It is enough for us, that

Thou knowest. We seek not to unrol the hidden scroll of thy counsel, but we receive with unwavering faith thy gracious revelation, that word which remains for ever inviolable. "I will ransom them from the power of the grave. —I will redeem them from death!"

9th. *Patience.*—

Oh! ever in thy prayers remember patience,
For hope of better days attends the good;
And virtue, like the wild bee, can extract
E'en from the bitter plant adversity,
Sweet food to cheer the spirit.

10th. *Mercy of God.*—When we are able (and who is not so?) to view the kind hand of God in the past; it removes painful apprehensions respecting what may come upon us, and induces us to hope that the final issue will be favourable, for we know that our God does not afflict willingly or unnecessarily.

11th. *Submission.*—Submission to the will of God and His dispensations is the only way

in which we can meet them with benefit and comfort. Resistance is vain, sinful, and injurious.

12th. *Heavenly Hope.*—Let us look beyond the disorders of the present time to that holy and glorious state which is the object of our believing expectation, and where undisturbed rest shall be enjoyed. Let the hope of heaven animate us on our course.

13th. *Trials.*—If trials are but sanctified to wean us from a world we must soon quit, we have reason to be thankful for them, and to number our crosses among our chief mercies. —*Newton.*

14th. *Earthly Enticements.*—Let us ever remember, that whatever keeps the mind from God, whatever stops the heart short of heavenly things, however laudable and harmless in itself, becomes sinful, by drawing the thoughts and affections from their proper and legitimate objects.—*More.*

15th. *Christianity.* — There is no other foundation for solid comfort but the Christian religion, not merely acknowledged as a truth, from the conviction of external evidence, (strong and important as that is,) but embracing it as a principle of hope and joy, and peace, and from feeling its suitableness to the wants and necessities of our nature, as well as its power to alleviate, and even to sanctify our sorrow.—*More.*

16th.—*Self-government.*—

" Who subdues his earthly heart for heaven,
Heaven to his prayers subdues his wish."

17th. *Prayer and Praise.* —Prayer and praise bring with them the comforts of heaven, to revive and enrich our weary and barren spirits in the gloomy seasons of sorrow, like the dew descending on the green pastures.

18th. *Joy.*—God, and not the world, is the fountain of joy, which the thoughtless talk of, but the good only possess.—*Horne.*

19th. *True Faith.*—Faith is to the soul in affliction, what an anchor is to a ship in distress.

20th. *Blessings.*—There are three requisites to the proper enjoyment of every earthly blessing God bestows upon us, which the events of the past, and the uncertainty of the future, should ever keep alive in our minds:—A thankful reflection on the goodness of the giver, a deep sense of the unworthiness of the receiver, and a sober reflection of the precarious tenure by which we hold it. The first should make us grateful; the second humble; the last moderate.—*More.*

21st. He that neglects prayer is a despiser of the promises annexed to the performance of the duty, and the high privilege of communion with God, who hath said, "Call upon me, and I will deliver thee." "Ask, and ye shall receive."

22nd. By the neglect of prayer, our faith, *which is the great* foundation of holiness, does

by degrees decay and perish, for prayer is the nourishment of faith. Prayer may be deemed the life of faith, and faith is the root of all that is good in us. It is our power, our strength, our consolation; and it is by prayer we receive this holy spirit, to bear, to resist, and to suffer, and are made partakers of the blessings of heaven.

23rd. True happiness arises from an inward sweet delight, occasioned by the harmonious adjustment between our will and the will of our Creator.—*Cudworth.*

24th. Think not that your heart is too bowed down to utter words before the majesty of heaven. "The eloquence of prayer," says the pious Bishop Wilson, "consists in our proposing our wants to God in a plain manner." "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me whole." "Lord, help me." "Lord, increase my faith." "Lord, save me, or I perish."

Prayer shows the dependence man has upon God, and keeps up a correspondence between *heaven* and earth.

25th. In proportion to the reality of our faith in Jesus Christ, will it be surely evident, that our main strength resides in the undisputed verities of the everlasting gospel. It is these plain and saving truths that are essential to the peace and happiness of the people of God.—*Original Memorials of Dr. Johnson.*

26th. The chief desire of a good man is to have intercourse with God. It is on this account principally, that he anticipates a future world, where all will suit the dignity and purity of his renewed nature. Whom have I in heaven but thee, for in thee is comprised every source of bliss.

CONSOLATION.

THINK, O ye, who fondly languish
O'er the grave of those you love,
While your bosoms throb with anguish,
They are warbling hymns above.
While your silent steps are straying
Lonely through life's deep'ning shade,
Glory's brightest beams are playing
Round the happy Christian's head.

There the sun's inferior lustre
Never sheds a feeble ray;
There no envious shadows cluster,
Shutting out the cheerful day.
Night, the face of nature veiling,
Rears her sable throne no more,
Midst those spirits pure inhaling
Life from Him whom they adore.

Light and peace at once deriving,
From the throne of God most high,
In his glorious presence living,
They shall never, never die.

Endless pleasures, pain excluding;
Sickness there no more can come;
There no fear of woe intruding,
Sheds o'er heaven a moment's gloom.

From their eyes celestial, swelling,
Drops of sorrow ne'er shall roll;
God himself has fixed his dwelling
In the temple of the soul.
Cease then, mourner, cease to languish
O'er the grave of those you love;
Pain and death, and grief and anguish,
Enter not the world above.

THE

HAPPINESS OF FAVOUR WITH OUR CREATOR.

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee."

"Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."

"Every branch that bringeth forth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

EXPRESSIONS of mutual good-will and good wishes amongst men, as they denote a reciprocal desire for each other's welfare, and complacency in it, cannot but be pleasing. How infinitely, therefore, must we prize the favour of our Creator, the fountain of love, and the supreme giver of friendship and endearment.

His favour comprises every thing that is

truly valuable, and that can contribute to our present happiness, and future eternal glory. Weak, and ever exposed to danger, how cheering the thought, that our God is as willing as able to uphold, strengthen, and preserve us! Exposed to mental darkness and various external and internal distresses, we remember that our God can disperse every cloud, diffuse light into the gloom of the soul, and restore tranquillity to our agitated spirit. The peace of our minds is liable to continual fluctuation; yet, as that peace is originally derived from our God, and is ever dependent on Him, so he can augment or impart it at His good pleasure. For all these transcendent blessings we are indebted to our high and compassionate Redeemer! O, let us then, in faith, continually regard the one great oblation once made for our sin, and rely on the prevalency of that intercession which he is evermore making for us at God's right-hand. It is Christ, from whom we derive all our comfort. In him is found that which will quench the thirst of the weary soul: how consolatory and *encouraging it is to* consider Him as a rock,

solid, immoveable, abiding! Christ yesterday, to-day, and for ever the same! wherever we are, He is still with us.

The calm deep waters of comfort and joy, that continually flow from him, follow us in never-failing streams, and are infinitely pure and refreshing.

O then let us fervently pray that we may never more seek supplies from worldly springs, resorting to them only as casual refreshments by the way, but from God: from God *alone* thankfully receive that living water, which will so abundantly satisfy us, that we shall never again thirst for any besides. Behold the Saviour who gives us this living water; behold him with the eye of faith lifted up upon the cross! Let us adore, believe, rejoice, and live. With such heavenly refreshment, with such animating knowledge of our Saviour's love and tenderness let us go forward in our pilgrimage, and with daily increasing diligence and ardour reach to those things which are before, that we may lay hold on eternal life, where happi*ness unclo*uded will crown the warfare we

have passed, and we shall for ever enjoy rest and peace.

Surely, such a promised reversion, on testimony so faithful and so true, fully counterbalances all the evil to which we are liable—are now exposed to. It supplies us with motives of submission, as well as opens to us unnumbered springs of comfort. Every thing here below is mutable; but whatever belongs to the Christian believer is everlasting. God, the unchanging God, who is his portion; the covenant, the faithful covenant, which is his security; and heaven, which is his inheritance—these can suffer no alteration. If we have these blessings imparted to us, (and they are graciously offered to every one,) we may well say, "This is all my salvation and all my desire." Oh, if we are thus blessed with a sense of the favour of our Creator, we shall, under the severest trials, enjoy a peace unruffled as the repose of heaven.

Our ransomed powers will then voluntarily be dedicated unceasingly to the service of our Creator, and our ardent devotions will inspire us *with pleasures as* permanent as they are ele-

vated and holy. And how can it be otherwise? If the contemplation and esteem of transcendent goodness, unrivalled excellence, and infinite perfection afford delightful satisfaction, we are permitted to experience it in all its plenitude. If the exercise of unsuspecting confidence in a Being of infinite power, omniscient wisdom, and unbounded goodness be the sure foundation of tranquillity and peace, we may enjoy the calmest serenity! If communion and fellowship with the best of Beings be a source of rational and unmingled happiness, then must the genuine Christian believer be truly happy.

He draws near to that God "in whose presence is fulness of joy," and he loses his relish for the shallow streams of earthly bliss. He mingles his notes of praise with the songs of the redeemed. He joins in the exalted employments of the angels of God, and receives a foretaste of the joys of Paradise. The glorious privileges which he enjoys fill his bosom with inward peace, and loving gratitude. The curse is removed from all his trials; he has a covenant-*right to all* divine favours; God is his father,

—death is his friend,—heaven is his home! He has nothing to do with events. Providence has engaged to make "all things work together for his good." All his high interests are secured: he dwells in safety, and fears no evil. Such is the man who *enjoys life* in all its vicissitudes.

And what are the principles which bring forth such rich fruits? even assured faith and love of God with an abiding sense of His divine favour.

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; *but we know*, that when he shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see him as He is."—(1 John iii. 2.) This faith (for which let us earnestly pray) is the Christian's guide, comfort, and support; a perpetual source within him of joy and thankfulness, and a ground of a hope and trust that never will be shaken.

Without causing us to neglect present duties, nay, rather imparting increased energy to perform them, such a faith, and such *an affiance, enables* us to look forward to

heaven, as our proper country; to our great Father, from whom we came, and to whom we must return; and to consider this perishable life as the trial and preparation for our *true life*, and our death as a step to immortality:

——"Immortality! Oh! that alone,
Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness—
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill."

"It doth not yet indeed appear what we shall be;" but of a future state, and of its perfect blessedness, we are perfectly assured. The gospel has brought life and immortality to certain light, and has furnished us also with all the aids necessary to direct and support our endeavours in attaining that blessedness. The Holy Scriptures frequently speak of this blessedness as the *assured portion through Christ,* of good persons after death. St. Peter, for instance, says, "When the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away;" and St. Paul, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the *righteous* Judge, shall give me at that day,

and not to me only, but to all them also that love his appearing."

Let us, then, comfort ourselves, let us comfort our bereaved friends with the plain impressive words of the great apostle: "I would not have you be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not as those without hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even them also that sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. *Comfort one another with these words.* When Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." But if these assurances are not sufficient to comfort and strengthen, and rejoice the spirit of the bereaved, surely the words of our divine Master, in his consolatory address to his disciples when he was about to suffer for them, and for all men, must convey a balm to the deepest wounds of sorrow.

"In my Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and will receive you unto myself, that *where I am there* ye may be also;" and let

us mark the transcending tenderness and encouragement of those words of the same all-gracious Saviour, "I ascend unto *my* Father and *your* Father, and unto *my* God and *your* God." These truths are not only fraught with comfort to the afflicted, but are calculated to make us enquire of our own hearts what is required on our part, in order to obtain the rich reward of the eternal vision of our Redeeming Lord. Must we not, in order to obtain the consolations arising from the thought, that in all our afflictions God is with us; must we not pour out our drooping souls to him in supplications for the influences of His grace, and with deepest humility, acknowledge that we are not worthy of the least of all his mercies and blessings? Must we not, with a sincere heart and submissive spirit, approach the mercy-seat, and there tell out our sorrows to Him who has a feeling of our infirmities? If we thus draw nigh to him in firm faith, with meek and lowly heart, we shall assuredly find that He hath *that* which shall satisfy the longing soul, more especially when *bowed down* and "sitting in darkness, and

the shadow of death." "God is faithful and just;" and he will not let those who trust in His promises, to be "ashamed" of their confidence. Pursuing this way of comfort, we shall be enabled to say with holy David, "In His favour is life. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." The miseries of time shall be lost in the anticipated glories of eternity: and the night of death shall pass away, to usher in the bright, unclouded morning of the resurrection.

Let us then, while sojourners here below, ever remember, that whatever trials may be appointed us by Him who doeth all things well, are intended to teach us our dependence, and to form our souls to the relish of heavenly joys. To attain happiness we must be qualified to receive it; but weak and corrupt as we are by nature, prone to rest with things temporal and to forget the things eternal: sorrows, afflictions, and trials are necessary to teach us our helplessness, and to effect the sanctification which is indispensable to render us, under divine grace, meet recipients of *God's favour and* all-gracious promises.

Hath he not promised the aid of His grace and blessing to all those who sincerely call upon Him in the time of trouble and temptation. Mark the tenderness of the expression: "As one whom *his mother comforteth*, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted." —(Isa. lxvi. 13.) "Unto you who fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."—(Mal. iv. 12.) "Turn ye to the strong-hold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee."—(Zec. ix. 12.) Further, the pages of Inspiration inform us, "That our light afflictions which are but for a moment, work out for us (if duly improved and sanctified) a far more exceeding weight of glory." "While we look not to the things which are seen, but to the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal," mourners, indeed, seem peculiarly called upon to live by faith, not by sight.

Oh, is it then nothing to us, sinners as we *are, that* we have been called into being to

run the race, however toilsome, for such a glorious crown? Designed in the counsels of the most High God, for the felicity of His eternal presence, where there is fulness of joy, and life for evermore. Is it not enough, that, having lost the image of our Creator, we have received all the aids and means of regaining it through the merits of our Redeemer?—that by that redemption, and by the illumination of the Holy Spirit we are but in the way of obtaining this heavenly inheritance? However long may be the time, however dark, and full of dangers and troubles may be the way, what is this, placed in comparison with *eternity!* O, let us compare what we are, (even when pressed down by a multitude of sorrows,) and what we deserve, with what God hath done for us, and what His mercy hath laid up for us if we love Him; then surely we must be humble; we shall adore in silence, the divine goodness and mercy, so far surpassing thought; or rather, we shall, in transports of gratitude, bless Him who thus vouchsafes to call us and to lead us *to felicity and glory.*

Prisoners of hope, arise,
And see your Lord appear:
Lo! on the wings of love he flies,
And brings redemption near.
Redemption through his blood,
He calls you to receive.
"Look unto me, the pard'ning God!
Mourner," he cries, "Believe."

ASCRIPTIONS OF PRAISE.

I WILL bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

O taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.

The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

The Lord redeemeth the soul of His servants; and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate.

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Thy mercy, O Lord, is in the heavens, and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds. How excellent is thy loving kindness, O

Lord! Therefore the children of men (may) put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. Thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with Thee is the fountain of life. In thy light we shall see light. According to thy name, O God, so is thy praise unto the ends of the earth; thy right hand is full of righteousness.

O Lord, open thou my lips, and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. Unto thee, oh, my strength, will I sing, for God is my defence, and the God of my mercy.

Thy loving kindness is better than life: my lips shall praise Thee. When I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night-watches, my soul shall be satisfied, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips.

Thou, O God, hast proved us, thou hast tried us as silver is tried. Come and hear, (all ye that mourn) all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He has done for my soul.

Which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.

I cried unto him with my voice, and He was extolled with my tongue.

Verily, God hath heard me: He hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, who hath not turned away my prayer nor His mercy from me.

Blessed be the name of the Lord, from this time forth for evermore. Praise the Lord!

Yes, mourning souls, be sure
God gives much peace on earth, much holy joy;—
Opes fountains of perennial spring, whence flow
Abundant happiness to all that wish
To drink: *not perfect bliss, that dwells above,*
Beneath the eyelids of the Eternal One,
And sits at his right-hand *alone;* but such
As well deserves the name, abundant joy;
Pleasures, on which the memory of saints
Of highest glory, may delight to dwell.

POLLOK'S *Course of Time.*

DEJECTION.

"Why standest Thou so far off, O God?"
PSALM ix. 1.

SUCH is frequently the pathetic question of a soul in trouble, when the Almighty seems to hide himself, behind clouds and darkness. But let not such sufferers think themselves deserted. The trial is indeed a severe one, but assuredly intended to excite and to perfect three most important Christian graces:—Humility, Resignation, and Faith. When inclined to droop and faint under this chastisement of our heavenly Father, let us think of him who, in strong agony, once uttered those awful words, "My God! my God! why hast thou forsaken me." Ah! let this affecting thought guard us from despondency, and teach us to bow in patient submission in *seasons of* calamity, grief, and pain.

"It is God's will." This is the first thought which carries with it the healing balm, and supports resignation; while the bright hopes of religion illuminate the darkened mind. Tranquillity and serenity are the companions of devotion; and the eyes that are cast down on this abode of grief and death shall be raised to heaven and to God, who is the faithful and the true; and whose mercy endureth for ever. Forsake me not O my God, that I forsake not Thee!

HOPE OF FUTURITY.

"This mortal shall put on immortality."

When bereavement desolates, and sorrow de presses the soul, and reminds us of our pe rishing nature, how infinite is the consolatio of the assurance that this corruptible sha put on incorruption, this mortal, immortality and that death shall be swallowed up in vic tory! It is only the grosser and less valuabl part that dies, and that but for a moment, a it were; the body shall then arise of a pure refined, and spiritual nature, and therefore ir incomparably more fitted for the soul's ope rations, than it is capable of being her below.

Meditation on these consoling truths canno

fail to prove an effectual antidote against those fears which the prospect of death awaken in the minds of many. Far beyond the clouds and storms that surround our present abode, we, with the eye of faith, descry the heavenly regions, where the virtuous are called to their high destination; where their time shall be diversified by employments more delightful and varied than the earth can afford; where the sphere of their existence shall be enlarged by the developement of new and unknown faculties, "through worlds without number, and ages without end." Where they shall be admitted to the society of immortal beings, in scenes more glorious than nature has ever displayed in the fairest arrangements and aspects of this lower world; but above all, where they shall ever enjoy the glorious vision of God their Creator, God their Redeemer, and God their Sanctifier, and eternally unite in the songs of the angelic choir, praising, adoring, venerating, and worshipping the Triune God!

"O may we pant for God in each desire,
And *with strong faith* augment the holy fire,

Stretch out our souls in hope, and grasp the prize
Which in eternity's deep bosom lies!
At the great day of recompense, behold,
Devoid of fear, the faithful Book unfold;
Then, wafted upward to the blissful seat,
Our Light, our Life, our God, our Saviour meet,
And praises sing through all eternity."

SACRED SONG.

"He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds."

O THOU who dry'st the mourner's tear,
How dark this world would be,
If, when o'erwhelm'd and wounded here,
We could not flee to Thee!

But Thou wilt heal the broken heart,
Which, like the plants that throw
Their fragrance from the wounded part,
Breathes sweetness out of woe.

When joy no longer soothes or cheers,
And e'en the hope that threw
A moment's sparkle o'er our tears,
Is dimm'd and vanish'd too!

Oh! who would bear life's stormy doom,
Did not Thy wing of love
Come brightly wafting through the gloom,
One peace-branch from above.

The sorrow touch'd by Thee grows bright,
With more than rapture's ray,
As darkness shows us worlds of light,
We never saw by day.

T. Moore.

PROBATION.

Sweet hope sustains the soul.

If we would consider this world on the true Scripture ground, as a state of probation; if we consider religion as a school for happiness indeed, but of which the consummation is only to be enjoyed in heaven, the Christian hope will support us, the Christian faith will strengthen us. We shall serve diligently, wait patiently, love cordially, obey faithfully, and be steadfast under all trials, sustained by the cheering promise held out to them "who endure unto the end."

Most of the beatitudes which Infinite compassion pronounced, have the sorrows of earth for their subject, but the joys of heaven for their *completion.*

The hour of death, which to the wish of the sceptic brings extinction, or the bewildering dread of something worse, is, to the Christian believer, the hour of his nativity, the birth-day of immortality. At the height of his sufferings the spirit of the good man is calm. He knows they are appointed in mercy by Him who cannot err, and that they will soon terminate.

In the zenith of his successes the sinner has the same assurance; but, oh, how different is the result of the same conviction!

An invincible faith sustains and consoles the one, while an inextinguishable dread gives the lie to the proudest triumphs of the other!

He then is the only happy man, not whom worldly prosperity renders apparently happy, but whom no change of circumstances can make essentially miserable, whose peace depends not on *external* events, but on *internal* support; on that hope which is the peculiar privilege, and on those promises which are the sole prerogative of the Christian. Those who connect with religion,

gloomy and austere ideas, and say that it increases the melancholy of the afflicted, little know its nature; are little able to conceive the serene and cheerful light it sheds on such as are influenced by its dictates, and guided by its principles. While centering their best hopes on the fruition of its divine promises, and making it their stay and support in all the troubles of a tempestuous world, the arrows of affliction pass by them comparatively harmless; and although, on every side, the storm may assail them, they still feel themselves safe, for they still with are God, their guide, preserver and friend!

Joy, far superior joy, that much outweighs
The comfort of a few poor added days,
Invades—possesses—and o'erwhelms the soul
Of him whom Hope has with a touch made whole.
'Tis heav'n, all heav'n descending on the wings
Of the glad legions of the King of kings:
'Tis more,—'tis God diffus'd through every part,
'Tis God himself triumphant in his heart.

COWPER.—*Hope.*

THE FRIEND DECEASED.

"I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me."

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Descend to contemplate
The form that once was dear!
Feed not on thoughts so dark and sorrowful—
The spirit is not there
That kindled that clos'd eye,
That throbb'd in that cold heart,
That in that motionless hand
Has met thy friendly grasp:
The spirit is not there!
It is but lifeless, perishable flesh
That moulders in the grave;
Earth, air, and water ministering particles,
Now to the elements,
Resolved—their uses done.

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Follow thy friend beloved,
The spirit is not there!

Often together have we talked of death:
How sweet it were to see
All doubtful things made clear!
How sweet it were, with powers
Such as the cherubim,
To view the depth of Heaven!

Beloved! thou hast first
Begun the travel of Eternity!
I gaze amid the stars
And think that thou art there,
Unfetter'd as the thought that follows thee!
And we have often said, how sweet it were,
With unseen ministry of angel power,
To watch the friends we lov'd.
We did not err.
Sure I have felt thy presence! Thou hast giv'n
A birth to holy thought;
Hast kept me from the world's enticing smile.
Oh, no! we did not err!
Our best affections here,
They are not like the toys of infancy;
The soul outgrows them not;
We do not cast them off.
Oh! if it could be so,
It were indeed a dreadful thing to die!

Not to the grave, not to the grave, my soul,
Follow thy friend beloved!

But in the lonely hour,
And in the evening walk,
Think that he companies thy solitude,
Think that he holds with thee
Mysterious intercourse;
And though remembrance wake a tear,
There will be *joy* in *grief*.

MONTGOMERY.

PRAYER.

"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help."

SUPPORT me, O blessed Lord, by thy sustaining grace, in these moments of anguish. Uphold me, I beseech thee, by thy Holy Spirit, that my faith fail not! Let thy precious blood cleanse and heal me; let thy Spirit renew and comfort me; let thy love constrain and console me; let thy free grace strengthen and establish me, thy blessed promises purify and perfect me, and let my faith victoriously triumph over sin and sorrow, through Him that loved me, and gavehimself a ransom for rebellious sinners, even Jesus Christ, my Redeemer. *Amen.*

"Being, all merciful! my sinking heart
In thine appointed trials, oh, sustain;
Infuse thy Spirit, and thy strength impart,
Patient to bear whate'er Thou shalt ordain."

GOD IS LOVE.

All his perfections, all his procedures are but so many modifications of this love. What is his omnipotence? The beam of his love. What is his omniscience? The medium through which he contemplates the objects of his love. What his wisdom? The scheme of his love. What the revelations of the gospel? The invitations of his love. What the threatenings of his law? The warnings of his love; saying, Man, do thyself no harm! A fence thrown around the pit of destruction and perdition, to prevent man from rushing into ruin! What was the incarnation of the Saviour? The richest illustration of his love! What were the tears of Christ? The beautiful developement of his love. What were the miracles of Christ? The condescensions of his love. What were the prayers of Christ? The pleadings of his love. What is this earth on which we are pilgrims? The theatre of the divine displays of his love:—God *is Love!* Dr. Waugh, freely.

MOTIVES FOR CONSOLATION.

———————Oh, I would speak
Of light from darkness, good from evil, brought
By an Almighty Power; and how all things,
If we will not refuse the good they bring,
Are messages of an Almighty love,
And full of blessings. Oh, be sure of this—
All things are mercies while we count them so:
And this believing, not keen poverty,
Nor wasting years of pain, or slow disease,
Nor death, which in a moment may lay low
Our pleasant plants;—not these, if they should come,
Shall ever drift our bark of faith ashore,
Whose steadfast anchor is securely cast
Within the veil—the veil of things unseen,
Which now we know not, but shall hereafter know.

Rev. R. C. French.

SUBMISSION.

——————— "'Tis meet
To muse such recollections;—not with pain,
But in *submission* to the will of Heaven."

Submission to God, in its full extent, is by no means an act of simple obedience. It implies the union and exercise of many Christian graces. To submit, indeed, in the narrow sense of the word, is not a matter of choice with any. He who created heaven and earth by his word, and who wields the elements at his pleasure, will certainly not want the power to give effect to his own purposes. Yet, there is a submission to which a gracious God invites his creatures as a privilege, while, at the same time, he requires it of them as a *duty*; a submission, not of the *act* only, but *of the heart*, grounded upon the deepest sense

and conviction of his wisdom, an entire trust in his providence, and a fervent love of his goodness. It is this principle which alone deserves the name of submission; and such a submission it is clear is essentially different from a mere acquiescence in events, which we have no power to controul. It is the homage of the will, the natural and beautiful expression of the best affections of the soul, of gratitude, of veneration, of filial love, and filial obedience; nor is this all:—If the highest earthly gratification is to be derived from *pleasing those we love*, if the humblest effort is delightful to express an ardent and generous affection, can it be a mean satisfaction to testify, by filial docility and submission, that entire confidence, that heartfelt gratitude and adoring love to our Almighty Father, which are the very elements which compose the temper and the character of the true Christian? Holy and heavenly elements, which shall survive the lapse of ages, and triumph over the desolations of nature.—MORE, *freely adapted.*

And let us never for one moment forget the constraining motives we have to exercise that submissive spirit resulting from gratitude, veneration, and love. It is no capricious and cruel tyrant who demands it of us, but an Almighty God, who is as gracious as he is powerful; as wise as he is compassionate. He has surrounded us with every thing that can encourage us to pursue the path He has appointed us to tread; and to cheer us by the way, allows us by contemplation to attain almost a knowledge of his perfections. He suffers us to read them in that collection of glory and magnificence which the universe displays, and yet more in the blessings and wonders of his revealed word. He permits us to perceive his power and goodness, infinity and happiness, and has condescended to become the guide of our wishes and our hopes. How grand the contemplation of the eternal triune God, let them who have sensibility, declare!

And can we hesitate a moment implicitly to trust in, and calmly repose on the infinite

ss of such an Almighty Friend, the
: of all our weakness, the inexhaustible
of all our consolations ?
emplating him in these endearing cha-
the love of him will be shed abroad
ieart, and we shall ever joy to submit
l to his will, saying with sincerity and
' The cup that my *Father* hath given
ill I not drink it?"
t certainly all those who truly love
ve an ardent desire to be beloved of
or we know that it is essential to love,
e a return of affection from its object.
not, however, expect to be beloved of
nless we strive to please him; nor can
se him without conforming to his will,
eping his commandments; which are
evous but joyous. The genuine love
l is always accompanied with a holy
e to please him, and an awful fear of
g him. A true believer is always
lest any thing, through negligence or
y, should escape him, and clash with
y, or offend his God. The language of
one is, "Teach me thy ways, O Lord,

I will walk in thy truth: unite my heart to fear thy name." May God make (me) perfect in every good work to do his will, "working in me that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ."

This love of God is not only continued in a Christian, but is also augmented under correction, for true love to God regards his glory and our salvation; two things that can never be separated, because Almighty God has so united them that they constitute the very essence of religion. Whenever, then, it pleases God to chastise us, these two great interests (his glory and our salvation) present themselves before our eyes; and whether we consider chastisements as the fruits of our sins which have offended our Creator, or as paternal strokes to establish us in holiness, they cannot but excite more powerfully our adoring love, humbling the heart, and rendering it submissive to the will of God, and causing us to regard *that* alone as the rule of duty and the source of happiness. Genuine love to God, from which flows this submission *and gratitude*, is ever tranquil and peaceful,

acquiescing in the appointments of his wisdom without complaining, happy in itself without inquietude; beautifully expressed by the words "possessing our souls in patience;" without a murmur, submitting to the will of our heavenly Father, with the affectionate docility of children, knowing that he doeth all things well, and for our ultimate good. Assured that times, seasons, events are in his power and ordination, we shall refer with perfect confiding love every thing to him who has promised to bring his reward with him in his own good time, and is unwearyedly mindful of those who trust in him. With these principles animating our hearts, and regulating our lives, we shall daily think less and less of its troubles and its trials; we shall weigh them against eternity, we shall thankfully consider them as the appointed means of our spiritual improvement; this will give them in our estimation a dignity and excellence which will render them not only tolerable, but even acceptable, by exalting our minds, subserving our highest interests, and shedding a *fructifying* influence on our moral

being, constraining us, through the principle of love, to employ each day of life in preparation for that solemn hour when eternity shall begin.

Oh, what are the cares, the troubles, the pleasures of this evanescent world, when opposed to the never-dying joys of the world to succeed? Surely it is not here that we are to look for succour in the hour of trial, for consolation in affliction, for inward substantial and permanent satisfaction! These are not of earth, but the world may be made, through divine grace, the pathway to this blessedness. Let us not then "seek for the living among the dead," but contemplate death as the beginning of life, the era of new hopes, and the portal to exalted happiness; while under divine guidance, we sedulously endeavour to improve the present short span of existence. Short as it is, every day, every moment is fraught with importance, when we consider its possible effects:—

"Eternity depending on an hour
Makes serious thought man's wisdom, joy, and praise."

Every day gives in its own account; and happy are they who are found consecrating it to God, and living as he would have his children, employed to his glory, submitting to his will, and working out their own salvation with filial fear and trembling awe, trusting alone in the one great oblation and satisfaction. Stationed on this rock, having the eternal God as our refuge, and underneath us his everlasting arms, what cause have we for entire submission, for we may regard with perfect tranquillity whatever can happen to us! The certainty that there is a great, a powerful, and compassionate God, that the government of all things is in his hands, that we are sustained by his power, that nothing can affect us, but, by his permission, and that we are dear in his paternal sight is, must be, the great anchor of our souls, which will preserve them sure and steadfast when the billows of trouble are most threatening, or the winds of affliction most turbulent.

That holy confidence which has for its basis the divine government, is alone adequate to *meet the trials* and struggles of life. It is

built upon a rock which no tempests can shake! Its foundations are eternal and immoveable! Its prospects are certain and immortal!

Oh, what comfort there is in the thought of being in the hands and at the disposal of a just and merciful Creator, who judgeth righteously and punisheth mercifully, and both equally for the good of his creatures!

Trials, calamities, bereavements, are the evidences of his care and loving kindness. It is no part of his paternal discipline to strike, but when he means to prove our faith, to correct our failings, to purify our natures, and to perfect our virtues. Shall we not, then, bow with much submission to the chastisement which has such merciful objects in view? Shall not these sufferings, or afflictions of a moment, be cheerfully borne, if (being sanctified) they serve to render us more worthy of that eternal weight of glory reserved for us in the world to come. Blessed and most encouraging is the promise, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will *be his God*, and he shall be my son."—

Rev. xxi. 7.) Of course it is not meant to mply that we can of ourselves ever be ren- lered *worthy*, but as evidences of our faith, our works are graciously accepted.

We know that the measure of affliction and he duration of suffering are in the hands of his unerring and all-holy God, and that he will give us strength for the day, if we ask of him. With this conviction, and acting in its spirit, we shall, under every circumstance, find solid comfort; or as the pious and excellent Baxter most forcibly expresses the truth: 'Thou sayest thy comfort is all in Christ, but I must tell thee it is a Christ *remembered and loved*, and not a Christ forgotten, or only talked of, that will *solidly comfort*." Now do we not forget our suffering Redeemer, when we faint under afflictions, or murmur at he chastisements of mercy?

Has not our divine Lord with majestic implicity and boundless tenderness said, 'Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe n God, believe also in me?" Do not these words make Jesus equally the object of our aith, *and hope*, and confidence, as the ever-

blessed God? for they clearly imply that faithful souls may repose an entire confidence in his power, protection, and government; and that pavilioned under the shelter of his wings, every sorrow will be dissipated, every fear will be chased away? Yes, well might the true servant of Christ declare, "Christ remembered must be productive of solid comfort to mourning souls."

And this divine friend, consoler, and guardian, descended from the throne of his glory, and in great humility was made flesh, and dwelt with us, and we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. "In this flesh he suffered, how much we cannot tell, but never sorrow was like unto his sorrow. "The spirit trembled and the body died."—(WATSON.) Turn we to sad Gethsemane; let our thoughts dwell on that awful and mysterious agony the blessed Redeemer endured *for us*, and on that bitter and angry cup, "full mixed and red from God's right-hand," presented to his holy lips, of which he drank the very dregs *that the* cup of blessing might be ours!

Surely, when we meditate upon these sufferings and the self-devotion of our blessed Lord, we must regard our afflictions even as particular honours which God confers on us, in order that we may prove our sincerity and love, by enabling us to walk in the steps of our Redeemer, and by them to be conformed to him through whom alone we receive pardon, protection, and salvation from a reconciled God. Doubtless a day will arrive when every mourner shall satisfactorily learn that it is with supreme wisdom that Jesus Christ has called us to affliction, and has joined the cross to the profession of true Christianity. That our possession of principles which entitle us to the name of Christian does not exempt us fromtrouble, experience abundantly proves, as well as our Bible instructs us; neither does it reverse our natural sensations: this were to make us stoics, not Christians. It would be to defeat the design of Providence, which is not to change the nature of affliction, but to make affliction *change us* by its sanctifying operations; hence it *must be felt*, and *felt keenly*. We must all feel that we need

to be mortified to the world and to sin, our hearts must be detached from creatures. Sometimes the very fibres of our nature must be torn asunder; our roots, which have struck deep into the earth, must be plucked up. Perhaps the desire of our eyes must be taken away with a stroke. We need to be driven away from the cisterns to the fountain, by having them torn and dashed to pieces. We are reminded by these visitations where our help is laid, and from whence we may derive it in moments of bodily or mental anguish.

Prostrated by weakness, let us fall, like the beloved disciple, at his feet who is the first and the last, that he may raise us up and put strength in us. We here find every thing that can inspire confidence, unlimited confidence. Encouraging and joyful are the words of our blessed Lord, "I am the way,"—the way to the Father,—to conscious fellowship, —sanctifying transforming intercourse,—assurances of paternal love,—to heaven itself. "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And why? Because he cannot slay *me in anger*; even that stroke must be love.

This entire reliance is as necessary to our peace as it is well-grounded. We are commanded to look unto Jesus; to run our appointed course with this blessed vision before us. Oh! on that glorious sight may rest the eye of our faith, till faith is absorbed in the glorious reality of our Lord himself. Let us cast all our care upon him who careth for us. Let us earnestly pray for that holy, unruffled serenity amidst vicissitudes which is derived from affiance in our God and Saviour. Then shall our minds, firm and unmoved, resemble the inhabitants of a peaceful island in the midst of a tumultuous sea. O let us ever aspire to this tranquillity. Let us cultivate an *unsolicitous disburdened* state of mind respecting events and their issues. Let the tablet of the future receive no impression from our wishes or anxieties, but be resigned up entirely to the hand of God. Let us not shape occurrences for the future, nor anticipate them in any preconceived forms; but abandonding so unprofitable and prohibited a toil, apply ourselves wholly to our daily allotted *task*.—LEIFCHILD'S DISCOURSES.

Beautifully has it been observed by a pious servant of Christ, "There is in life much to be done, much to be learnt, and much to be suffered: we should live in time in reference to eternity."—(ADAM CLARKE.) This one thought is sufficient to make us bow with submission to the trials, troubles, and bereavements which are inseparable to our earthly pilgrimage. We have here no continuing city; but we seek one, even a heavenly. There are few but must have felt that bereavement tends to detach the thoughts and affections from the world, and to concentrate them on things eternal; on that sinless and unsuffering world our departed friends have entered!

"What says this transportion of our friends?
It bids us love the place where now they dwell,
And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor."

It is readily granted, that there are moments when sorrow seems to overwhelm the spirit: our only remedy or alleviation is to "cast our care upon the Lord." The delu*sions* of time flee before the might of that

spirit which is evoked by this act of faith and affiance; and the affections acquire an impulse which elevates them above the things of a perishable world, to the grand realities of eternity, and to that compassionate Redeemer, whom having not seen we love; and he is the same to-day, yesterday, and for ever; and who endears himself to us by being our joy in sadness, our way, our truth, our life, our consolation, the fountain of blessedness, and the bread of life. Let us then be of good cheer; for though the tempests of sorrow may rage and swell, anchored on Christ, we shall escape the storm, and in God's good time shall reach the haven where we would be!

I could not fear.—A message from above
Reveal'd thy name, and told me it was love.
There were no words, but thoughts of peace divine
Breath'd from thy Spirit, and inhal'd by mine.
That hour I prov'd, 'mid sorrow, loss, and care,
The power of faith, the prevalence of prayer.
And since that hour, whatever ills assail'd,
I often prov'd it—and it never fail'd;
And I have learn'd at length to know
The *gain of grief*, the blessedness of woe;

To feel that heavenly peace vouchsaf'd alone
When all the blandishments of life are gone.
Yet long I struggled with the chastening rod,
Marvelling, and murmuring at the ways of God—
Who seem'd to shroud His smiles in wayward gloom
And blight the hopes Himself had bade to bloom.
I know him now! And, ah! I know the heart
That thus in mercy he ordain'd to smart,
In mercy made each earthly prospect dim,
That it might centre all its love on Him!

* * * * * * * *

My broken spirit, humbled in the dust,
Mourn'd o'er its chastisement, but own'd it just!
O God of mercy, while I deem'd thy wrath
Had swept the fairest blossoms from my path,
The angel of thy presence still was near,
Treasur'd each sigh, and number'd every tear;—
He bade the fickle hopes of life depart,
And yield to God an undivided heart;
And prove his power, whatever lot befal,
To guide, to comfort, and to save through all.

Jacob. Prize Poem.—Rev. T. E. HANKINSON.

GOD UNSEARCHABLE.

The ways of the Most High, though often to us veiled in clouds and darkness, are, we know, all ordered by Infinite Wisdom; and while we acknowledge how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out, we should humbly regard the voice which speaks under every dispensation:— "Be still, and know that I am God!"

DEATH.

"Long hath it with mortal toil the spirit pure,
Flies from those ills where mortals here endure.
If only born to ills, from ills to fly,
Why born at all, if only born to die!—
But hark! A trumpet sounds! A welcome guest
Is hail'd to regions of eternal rest.
The mortal yields! resigns his earthly clod,
A Saviour's merit raises man to God."

Yes, it is this conviction which renders th
grave a grand spectacle, and divests the s
pulchre of its darkness and terror. Our b
loved ones are not dead, but sleep in t
bosom of their Redeemer, who hath abolish
death! There is no such thing as death
the [illegible]tian, for is it not said, "Tho
[illegible]us will God bring with him
[illegible] once died, dieth no more

Death was permitted once to tyrannise, but all his authority closed in that single act; he hath no more dominion over him who bowed himself to the grave, that *man* might rise to heaven; that the spirit might escape from its mortal coil, and return rejoicing to the God who gave it. This solitary triumph of death allowed, releases the followers of Jesus for ever from his dark dominion.

It is here that our blessed Redeemer leads indeed captivity captive; and destroys the last enemy, in permitting the last exertion of his power. He is dethroned in his own dominions; he has accomplished all that he could achieve. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me," says our blessed Lord, "that of all which he hath given me, I shall lose nothing, but shall raise it up again at the last day."

O let us, for our supreme consolation, when bending over the cold forms of those we love, receive the fact simply upon the graciously revealed testimony of the holy record, that "that which is sown is that which shall be *raised; and herein* death is swallowed up in

victory." It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural, it is raised a spiritual body; and whatever changes the one must undergo, to constitute the other, it is still declared to be the same body that shall be raised for that purpose, and receive this transformation. Yes, blessed assurance, the soul of man is not to sleep in eternal night; it is spiritual and immortal. We are intended for the society of angels and the "spirits of just men made perfect," in the beatific vision of God, where our employment will be to hymn the throne of grace, and ever to be seated in glory at the right hand of our Redeeming Lord.

Enquire of the saints who have attained to this blissful consummation, wherefore are they before the throne of God? They came out of great tribulation, have "washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," and by that means they are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the *saints in* light, for without holiness of life,

none can obtain the perfection of their nature. Sanctification must be effected on earth, before glory can be enjoyed in heaven. He who created the world, who rules it in mercy and in wisdom, who hath redeemed it by his blood, has the whole ordering of our lot in time, and will provide for us through eternity. The propriety, the mercy, and the expediency of all his dispensations, however dark and mysterious they may now appear, shall then be discerned, acknowledged, and lauded. When his divine economy is then openly displayed in its finished state, as terminating in the consummate felicity of his servants, its absolute rectitude, its supreme holiness will fill even angels with astonishment, silence for ever the murmurings of the wicked, and realize the most sanguine expectations of the good.

Thou mayst be terrible, O death,
To those who hold by vital breath
Each treasure of the heart;
Whose happiness is found below;
Who with this life must all forego,
From all they prize must part.

But to the Christian, who serene
Has look'd through faith on things unseen,
Thy solemn trying hour
Is far from dreadful; for his soul
Knows who can nature's fears controul,
And trusts a Saviour's power.

His treasure is laid up on high,
"Where moth or rust shall come not nigh,
Nor thieves break through, nor steal."
The only bonds that hold him here
Are duty, reverential fear,
And *ties* that all should feel.

But duty, is he called above,
Prompts upward; and perfected love
Can cast out every fear:
And nature's ties, though strong their force,
Are loosed by God, their all-pure source,
Who gave them earth to cheer.

Then thou, O Death, the insatiate foe
Of man, art laid for ever low;
No longer to appal.
From sin redeemed, with humble trust,
The spirit waits to join the just,
Where God is all in all!

B. BARTON.

THE MOURNER'S HOPE.

The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.
COWPER.

IN his own spirit man is still
Or most debased or dignified:
If there his duty he fulfil,
And, faithful to his heavenly guide,
Walk on in hope—though clouds may hide
At times the pole-star's cheering ray,
Those clouds at seasons thrown aside,
Shall give a glimpse of glorious day:
Of day more bright, and skies more pure,
Than ever dawn'd or shone on earth;
Of hopes that faith can render sure,
Since faith alone could give them birth.
And in the all-transcendent worth
Of thoughts unearthly and sublime,
The soul with joy, surpassing mirth,
Shall triumph o'er the woes of time!

PEACE BE WITH YOU!

——————— With my peace,
Now dying, I endow you: of that peace
The powers of this world never shall despoil you.
Calvary.—Book 2nd, 91.

In that wish, in that peace, all good things are combined: but without piety thou canst not have peace. Like the rainbow, peace rests upon the earth, but its arch is lost in heaven! Heaven bathes it in hues of light. It springs up in the midst of tears and clouds. It is a reflection of the eternal sun; it is an assurance of calm; it is the sign of a great covenant between man and his God.

Such peace is the smile of the soul. It is an emanation from the glorious orb of immortal light. What are the pleasures and the pomps of life? As the lamp shines, so life glitters for an hour, but the soul's light is the *star that* burns for ever.—Bulwer.

RESIGNATION.

"There is a silence of the heart
Where humble resignation dwells;
Though grief thrust in his poison'd dart,
And, like the sea, affliction swells.
'Tis passion's calm, no rising wind,
Can ruffle, and no storm o'er sway
The equilibrium of the mind,
Which e'er to Heaven's high will gives way:
For power divine enchains self-will,
When he, who by his mighty nod
Stays nature's shocks,—exclaims, "Be still,
And know that I am God!"

True resignation is founded on a principle which never can be shaken: it must be a real sentiment of the heart, inspired by a motive sufficient to excite and support it; and this constraining motive is an ardent and sincere *love to God, the* all-wise governor of events.

This confidence is inspired by the consideration, that every thing which happens to us is appointed by him, whose wisdom and goodness are infinite as his power. It is not possible that any comfort can spring from the thought that the evils we suffer are unavoidable. The unwilling submission which yields to the power which it cannot resist, is far, very far from the resignation of a Christian.

In the one instance, an apparent calmness may disguise the secret murmurs of the heart, or possibly, a painful effort may compel the violence of passionate grief to give place to the stillness of despondency; but in the other, the stroke, however deeply felt, is yet willingly endured, and a firm and affectionate confidence, which no affliction can remove, inspires that heartfelt resignation which triumphs over the feelings of nature, though it seeks not, is required not to destroy them. "Jesus wept" at the grave of his friend! The heart which this affiance in God has tranquillized, rejoices in the thought that an Almighty friend will dispose of all events as shall be *most for* the real interest of those who truly

e him and depend upon him, however
nful may be their trials. Those trials are
, acutely felt, by creatures conscious of sin
l frailty; but it is their happiness to be-
re, and to know, and to be enabled to look
the one great cause of every salutary trou-
, trial, and difficulty, and with sincerity to
r up the comprehensive prayer, "May
will of God be mine!" "Lord teach me
submit and to acquiesce in all thy Holy
l!" It has been beautifully remarked by
who was tried in the furnace of affliction,
oscoe,) that "the firmness under trial, of
ich we speak, is not the mere effort of
man strength, but is founded on that hu-
lity and submission to the will of God,
ich is the result of an entire confidence in
his dispensations. Under this impression
cannot but perceive that his goodness is
great, although not so apparent, in what
takes away, as in what he gives; in what
denies to our wishes, as in what he grants:
l although it certainly requires strong
rt to act upon these convictions at the
ment when calamity falls upon us, yet we

may be assured that every event that occurs, if rightly used and improved by us, is only a part of that great moral process which is intended to exalt our character, and through the sanctifying Spirit to improve our capacity for a better state."—(ROSCOE's Life, vol. ii. p. 440.)

When the tender ties of nature are severed, it is meet that we should mourn, it is meet that we be in heaviness. To endeavour, like the Stoics, not to feel afflictions, is sinful as well as impracticable, for it is to despise the chastening of the Lord, which is alike forbidden, with fainting under it. Religion seeks not to dry up the stream of sorrow, but to bound and keep it within its proper channel. "Grace (says the pious Leighton) does not destroy the life of nature, but adds to it a life more excellent." Where there is no feeling, there can be no exercise of patience. We learn an important lesson of resignation, from a consideration of our present frailty. Our heavenly Father and Physician perfectly knows our frame and our maladies, and what *kind* and quantity of chastisement is needful

for our case. If therefore we view this gracious God in all our afflictions, and consider calmly the paternal wisdom that appoints them for our spiritual instruction, what an exalted idea do they give us of his mercies, and what a mitigation do we find to the anguish of our hearts. Well may it be said, what a dark chaos is this world, while we see not God in it! To live destitute of the divine presence, to discern no beamings of the heavenly glory! Such benighted beings may indeed sink into despondency; but not so the Christian, who, taught to think little of the present and much of the future, keeps his God always in view, as the director and end of all his actions; consults him in sorrows, trials, difficulties, temptations, and implores his divine guidance and protection. On all occasions such a Christian thankfully and humbly directs his prayer to his God, who heareth and answereth prayer. He submissively waits to receive all intimations of the divine will; and with affectionate alacrity desires to be as one of those ministering *spirits which* are always ready to do his

pleasure, to act always as in his presence, and contented to be searched and tried; or, as St. Augustine says, "use me here as it pleaseth thee, so as hereafter it may be well with me." Surely there is much of heaven in a life regulated in such a spirit.

It is to walk our appointed way in a halo of serene mild light, that infuses no unquiet thoughts, admits no guilty fears, and nothing to disturb or annoy us. We have alluded to a species of resignation with which it may be feared many deceive themselves. But, observes one, "The wounds which such stoicism would cauterize, religion heals." That only is the resignation which diffuses serenity to the perturbed spirit; which, when we are drinking the bitter cup, can say to him whose wisdom presents it, with intensity of faith and love can say, "Thy will, not mine, be done." "It is God's will," we say to ourselves, and this first thought supports our resignation. Does it not confer a dignity on sorrows to know we have a God to whose boundless love we may confide them? With what eagerness, *with what* transport, does the afflicted soul

embrace the comfortable hopes which religion presents! We invoke the God of the "spirits of all flesh," we pour out our hearts before him; our present agonies, our past griefs, and we are graciously enabled to rise from our interesting devotion with a spirit more serene, and filled with a tranquillity and hope that devotion has diffused through our souls. Such is the happiness of approaching him who is good, who can do every thing, whom none ever loved without receiving comfort.

It is such approaches to our Creator which renders the enquiring and humble spirit familiar with the high attributes of the Deity, before whom we bow with faith unfeigned, and love most reverent. We are enabled by his imparted Spirit of grace to bless him as much from the heart when he withers our gourds, as when he raises our pleasant plants; and that with a depth of feeling, of which, perhaps, none but the sorrow-stricken heart is capable. This is the resignation which religion teaches; this the sacrifice of self which it requires.

The Christian knows that blessed are those

who die in the Lord; even so saith the Spirit; and the heart of the Christian mourner, in its deepest distresses, has the witness of the Spirit to that consolatory assurance.

Live on in hope; seek thy pure treasure there,
There, where the good man garners up his hope.
And if the record of his deeds be fair,
Esteems all else but vanity and dust;
Content to know, whate'er the lot he share,
That God appoints it still, and God is just.
Sonnet to Roscoe, 2nd vol. 114.

" Religion tells of amity sublime
Which no condition can preclude. Of One
Who sees all suffering, comprehends all wants.
All weakness fathoms, can supply all needs."

"THERE IS A SPIRIT IN MAN."

THERE are times when the divinity stirs within us; when the soul abstracts herself from the world, and the slow and regular course of earthly business does not keep pace with the heaven-directed mind. Then earth lets go her hold; the soul feels herself more akin to heaven, and soaring upward, the denizen of her native sky, she begins to muse upon herself and her own capacities, and to hold self-discourse in a strain above mortality. Such thoughts and feelings may, perhaps, be deemed visions of the imagination; but we may certainly aver they are no unprofitable visions. Far from this, these moments of silence and meditation are often of eminent utility *both to* ourselves and others; for they

prove that the spirit is not always the bondman to the flesh; that there is something *immortal* in us, something that, amid the din of life, urges us to enquire after the attributes of a more spiritual nature. Let then the cares and the business of the world sometimes sleep, for this sleep is the awakening of the soul. It is led to recollect how high is its destination, even for the enjoyment of God for ever!

It argues a right frame of soul if, in these moments of self-retirement, we earnestly desire and fervently pray for a believing view of future glory, to which our Saviour has pointed the way, the harps of angels invite us, our departed loved ones attract us, and the voice of our gracious God calls, as our eternal rest. What so likely to awaken and to cherish these heaven-directed thoughts and aspirations as the bereavement of our dear friends?

What means this transportation of our friends?
It bids us love the place where now they dwell,
And scorn the spot which they have left so poor.
YOUNG.

But whether this great spiritual blessing

be vouchsafed or denied, it behoves us submissively to bow to the will of our Creator, assured that whatever is for his own glory and our permanent good, he will certainly bestow. In every case patience will remove doubt and discouragement; for we must inevitably shortly pass into that never-ending state, where our knowledge of spiritual things will be perfect: and, oh! what a source of strong consolation is it to know, that when our heart fails and our strength fails, when the Lord hath added grief to our sorrow, when we faint in our sighing and find no rest, then our God is the strength of our heart, and (will be) our portion for ever! Yes, blessed be God, we may confide in his assurance, that, "as our day is so shall our strength be."

This soul-cheering doctrine is applicable to every situation in which a frail and weak human being may be placed, and eminently calculated to administer consolation under afflictive dispensations. What a steadfast anchor it offers to the agitated soul, when tossed by the storm of distress, to know that

in proportion to our danger and our helplessness will our Creator impart his aid and his strength.

O may our faith never fail to realize this divine support, and thankfully acknowledge the blessedness of it; praising him who, in the inestimable gift of his holy revealed word, enables us at once to supply, through faith, the bereavement of temporal comforts by the glorious vision of future blessedness, and excites us to use all diligence to ensure, through our Redeemer, our eternal well-being!

O, when we search out our spirit, and enquire what are the thoughts that fluctuate there, let us remember that there is a season of correction, appointed in mercy by a gracious God, to bring us nearer to him; a time to mourn—dark clouds in our moral world, as in the natural, which, though gloomy and dreary to the vision, are yet full fraught with fructifying influences, and generally succeeded by fruitfulness and beauty.

Such are the dark clouds of sorrow in their *salutary* effect on our moral being and our

spiritual graces; for those clouds literally break in rich blessings on our head, bringing forth fruits of joy unspeakable and full of glory. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted," says holy David, "that I might understand the wondrous things of thy law. Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept thy word."

These clouds of sorrow are in mercy vouchsafed by Heaven, to lead the immortal spirit to reflection and self-improvement, by profitable meditation on our being and our end. Thoughtful serenity is the concomitant of solitary devotion. Much spiritual instruction may be derived from conversing with the silent dead, for the awakened soul is thereby prepared for heavenly communion, and our confidence in our God becomes in proportion stronger and stronger.

"Children of woe, awake!
The Lord thy footsteps yet hath led,
And will not now forsake."——
——"O raise thine eyes, and dare to trust
Jehovah's changeless word,"
Ismael, Prize Poem, Stanza 15.

HYMN.

THROUGH all the various shifting scene
Of life's condition, ill or good,
Thy hand, O God, conducts, unseen,
The beautiful vicissitude.

Thou givest with paternal care,
Howe'er unjustly we complain,
To each their necessary share,
Of joy or sorrow, health and pain.

Trust we to youth, or friends, or power?
Fix we on this terrestrial ball?—
When most secure, the coming hour,
If thou seest fit, may blast them all.

When lowest sunk with grief or shame,
Fill'd with affliction's bitter cup,
Lost to relations, friends, and fame,
Thy powerful hand can raise us up.

Thy powerful consolations cheer;
Thy smiles suppress the deep-drawn sigh;
Thy hand can dry the anguish'd tear
That rises in the mourner's eye.

All things on earth and all in heaven,
On thy eternal will depend;
And all for greater good were given,
And all shall in thy glory end.

This be my care—to all beside
Indifferent let my wishes be:
Passion be calm, and dumb be pride,
And fix'd, O God, my soul on thee!

MUSINGS.

" He who does not meditate has no real consciousness of being."

1.—

" My friend hath pass'd away !
For the kindly look, the word of cheer,
My heart may thirst in vain :
And the face that was a light to mine,
It cannot come again !"

No more. Never! What words for feeble mortals—for they are words which have no bounds.

I shall never see him more, would be a phrase which we could not have power to pronounce, if we had not the blessed assurance of an existence after this life.

2.—A spirit destined for immortality should

be continually endeavouring (with the aid of the Holy Spirit) to improve its capacities of reflection and thought, elevating them beyond the narrow interests of this transient state of being.

3.—Faithful servants of the Most High! enduring with patient love and lowly submission the chastisements of your heavenly Father, you only have a right to make but one world of this world and the next. Nothing darkens your perspective, nothing checks your hopes.

What a noble spectacle is firm faith, bringing forth the rich fruits of virtue!

Oh, let it be our continual aim to rank with those who thus let their light shine before men, that they may glorify their Father who is in heaven.

"Thus fares the man who hath prepar'd
A rest for his desires, and sees all things
Beneath him, and hath learn'd the
Book of man, full of the notes of frailty."

4.—Bereavement tends to detach our thoughts *from the* world, and concentrate

them on things eternal. Life when a little protracted leaves us comparatively alone in the world. Our friends depart successively, and we feel solitary and pensive. Yet we must not dwell exclusively on the darker scene; but in the exercises of faith endeavour to realize the felicity of our departed friends, and to be in spirit associated with them in the world of light and glory where they now dwell.

Perhaps we do not derive the consolation which it is our privilege to do from Christian hope.—WATSON'S LIFE.

5.—It has been most truly remarked, that resignation is not the prostration of a weary and exhausted mind, bending to its destiny from the effect of palsied debility, or the incapacity any longer to indulge the natural love of life, but a voluntary and religious effort, flowing from perfect reliance in the wisdom and goodness of God, and an entire devotedness to him as a loving Father.

It is all of mercy! may be the watch-word *of every* believer.—*Ib.*

6.—They shall call his name Emanuel! God with us! God with us! with us all! with each of us; with us at all times, under all circumstances; especially with us in deep sympathy with all our sorrows, dangers, and sufferings. Therefore, though we may be in deep waters we may feel the rock firm beneath!

7.—It is frequently a benefit to be destitute of help or comfort from man, both as it urges us to seek the God of our spirits, and inclines him in mercy to grant it. When we do thus seek, believing, he graciously accepts the prayer of those who are even driven to him as their last stay: he reproaches not our tardy application.

8.—Christians are too little aware what their religion requires from them, with regard to their wishes. When we wish things to be otherwise than they are, we lose sight of the great practical part of godliness.—CECIL.

9.—Schooling the heart is the grand means *of personal religion.*

10.—*Recollection the life of religion.* The Christian wants to know no new thing, but to have his heart elevated more above the world, by secluding himself from it as much as his duties will allow, that religion may effect its great end, by bringing its sublime hopes and prospects into more steady action on the mind.—CECIL.

11.—The Christian will sometimes be brought to walk in a solitary path: God seems to cut away his props, that he may reduce him to himself. His religion is to be felt as a personal, particular, appropriate possession: he is to feel there is but one Jehovah to bless. To know Christ Jesus for ourselves, is to make him a consolation, delight, strength, righteousness, companion, and end.

12.—There is something in religion, when rightly apprehended, that is masculine and grand. It removes those little desires which are the constant hectic of discontent.

13.—O death, where is thy sting? O grave, *where is* thy victory?

The bards of old bewail'd their birth,
And, shuddering, trac'd their future doom;
For all was wretchedness on earth,
And doubt and dread beyond the tomb.
Did woe their "life of life" consume?
Their sweet and plaintive strains express
No hope but in eternal gloom,
No rest except in nothingness?

Not thus when death itself appears,
The Christian dreads the stern decree;
Hope soars above this vale of tears,
And brightens in eternity!
Redeemer of the world, by thee
Such mercies to thy saints are given;
Such let thy grace accord to me—
The cross on earth, the crown in heaven.

DALE.

14.—God is love! To it we owe the blessed gospel; that testimony of love to all, and love in every thing. Love when he chastens, and love when he hides himself behind dark clouds and afflictive dispensations. Here is the ground of a firm faith. By bereavements we are more strongly attracted to that blessed *world*; we find a richer interest in

the heavenly inheritance. Our future journey will be cheered by the hope of reunion with those who are gone before, and the blissful assurance that our loved ones are in the glory and smile of our divine Lord. Let this assurance induce us, while yet here below, to cherish the delightful feeling that our God is ever with us, about our path, and about our bed, and spiest out all our ways; then shall we pass through things temporal, with things eternal fully and constantly in view. For what is life? How unsubstantial until filled with those feelings and acts which connect it with the perfection of eternity, and convert it into the vestibule of the future spacious temple of being, through which we cannot pass, and from which we can never be excluded!

CHRISTIAN CONSOLATION.

THE voice that I did more esteem
Than music in her sweetest key;
Those eyes which unto me did seem
More comfortable than the day;
Those now by me, as they have been,
Shall never more be heard or seen;
But what I once enjoyed in them,
Shall seem hereafter as a dream.

All earthly comforts vanish thus;
So little hold of them have we,
That we from them or they from us
May in a moment ravish'd be.
Yet we are neither just nor wise,
If present mercies we despise;
Or mind not how there may be made
A thankful use of what we had.

WITHER.

HYMN TO HESPERUS.

FRAGMENT.

"The stars,
Man's heavenly friends."

BRIGHT solitary beam! fair speck!
That calling all the stars to duty,
Through stormless ether gleams to deck
The fulgent west's unclouded beauty.
All silent are the fields, and still;
The umbrageous wood's recesses dreary;
As if calm came at thy sweet will,
And nature of day's strife were weary.

Blent with the season and the scene,
From out her treasured stores, Reflection
Looks to the days when life was green,
With fond and thrilling retrospection.
The earth again seems haunted ground;
Youth smiles, by hope and joy attended,

And bloom afresh young flowers around,
With scent as rich, and hues as splendid.

Fair star! with calm repose and peace,
I hail thy vesper beam returning;
Thou seemst to say that troubles cease,
In the calm sphere where thou art burning.
Sweet 'tis on thee to gaze, and muse:
Sure, angel wings around thee hover,
And from life's fountain scatter dews
To freshen earth, day's fever over.

Star of the mourner! 'mid the gloom,
When droops the west, o'er day departed,
The widow bends above the tomb
Of him who left her broken-hearted.
Darkness within, and night around,
The joys of life no more can move her;
But when thou shedst thy beam around,
Heaven's eye appears to glow above her.

Star of declining day, farewell!
Ere liv'd the patriarchs, thou wert yonder;
Ere Isaac, 'mid the piny dell,
Went forth at eventide to ponder:
And when to death's stern mandate bow,
All whom we love, and all who love us,
Thou shalt uprise, as thou dost now,
To *shine and shed* thy tears above us.

Star that proclaims eternity.
Over the last sun when twilight weepeth,
Thou lightest thy beacon-tower on high,
To say "He is not dead but sleepeth."
And forth with dawn thou comest too,
As all the hosts of heaven surrender;
To prove thy sign of promise true,
And usher in day's glorious splendour

CONTEMPLATION OF GOD IN THE WONDERS OF HIS CREATION.

Love kindles as we gaze! We feel desires
That give assurance of their own success;
And that infused from heaven must thither tend.
COWPER.

EVEN in the most dreary pathway of this wilderness of sorrow, a bereaved heart, if but at peace with itself, may find a countless multitude of partial enjoyments: but, alas! such is the absorbing nature of grief, that the sufferer, under its influence, seems, too frequently, unconscious of their existence. The soul seems open but to one impression that agitates, corrodes, and consumes it.

It is the benign office of true religion to direct the thoughts to those objects which shall rescue the mind, at least in a measure,

from the oppressive weight which paralyzes its powers, and to infuse those soothing impressions which they are calculated to inspire.

To those who feel a conviction that God is verily a God of love, the contemplation of him as he is manifested in the wondrous works of his creation affords one of the most pleasing and efficient sublunary sources of alleviation to the agonies of grief, gently directing the affections towards him who is so worthy of our unbounded and exalted love; to him who is the eternal model of perfect wisdom and unlimited goodness! We know not where to begin, or where to stop, when we expatiate on the wonders which on every side meet our adoring vision. "How great is the Creator, how profound and infinite the source from whence such life, such splendour, and such goodness flow! If there is so much to admire, so much to astonish, within the bounded compass of our view, what will it be when the curtain of all worlds shall be raised for us, and we shall see the wondrous work complete and without end, in the eternal presence of our Creator and Redeemer!"

Surely the most noble of all these wonders is the faculty which has been bestowed upon us of admiring and conceiving them! Well may the grateful tongue exclaim, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits."

How astonishing and sublime is that relation that exists between the innumerable beauties of creation, with the intelligence which permits us to enjoy and to be made happy by them!

What relation, we would ask, is so surprising as that of the order and harmony of the universe, with the moral intelligence which enables us to anticipate the enjoyments of wisdom, and unclouded knowledge? All is harmony, consistency, and grace through the whole of the divine plan, from the smallest to the most magnificent of the works of God. The adaptation or congruity between cause and effect is everywhere the same, and in all things equally exquisite and perfect: all manifesting the boundless love of the Creator, and prompting us to raise to him our *highest songs of* praise.

" A voice is heard that mortal ears hear not;
A loud hosanna sent from all his works;
Which he that hears it, with a shout repeats,
And adds his rapture to the general praise."

Beauty, wisdom, and beneficence are every where about us: "There is a soul in all things and that soul is God." For our own sakes, as well as to praise his glorious majesty, we ought then to cherish a relish for the contemplation of these attributes of our Creator; for such is the soothing effect of this mental exercise, that it cannot be practised without a sensible pleasure accompanying the perceptions it evokes; for it seems to win the soul to a closer communion with that holy and compassionate Being, upon whose everlasting arm the exhausted and bereaved spirit may confidently and sweetly repose. Let us then enquire diligently of our own hearts, with deep seriousness, when our eye observes with admiration that " the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord," if we have not ample and substantial reason to repose our dejected spirit upon a Being so excellent in power, wisdom, *and goo*dness, displaying in every part of his

creation, a truth which is so important and interesting for us to know, viz. "God is love."

For whom, and for what end, such an exuberance of benefits? Were they not created for man, whom the great Creator has delegated to have the dominion over them? There would be no beauty, no order, in the world, were it not to minister to the happiness and service of man, that his spirit might be elevated to his God, and his heart improved and sanctified by meditation on his wonders of providence and grace. When the eye measures the expanse of heaven, when it glances refreshingly over the verdant hills and shady valleys of a beautiful world, can the heart remain unaffected? Will not the spirit retire within itself with a pure delight, and enquire, gratefully enquire, Are not all these lovely objects the productions of that divine skill, the result of that infinite wisdom, the token of that rich beneficence, the transcendent brightness of that Almighty love, which became poor that we might be made rich, and *humbled itself to* death, that we might live

for evermore? When traversing the solitary wild, watching the foaming torrent, or ascending the awful mountain, the mind seems to gain a nearer access to the Deity, and to estimate the pride and the changes of life according to their just value,—unworthy the anxious thought of an immortal being. Such hours of pensive reflection bring quietness to the perturbed spirit, because the contemplation of the divine attributes, displayed in such scenery, strengthens the trust and reliance of the soul, by infusing the conviction, that the same Almighty God regards with benignity and changeless love, the feeble being whose heart he has by his Spirit disposed to admiration of his wisdom.

"The meadows are as flowery as ever; the mountains as verdant: when all nature smiles, can the heart of man be a mere desert? Forbid it gratitude!"

If to recal the past seems to be but to conjure up the bitter sense of loneliness and departed joy, and to pass a dark cloud over the emerging sunshine of the soul, will not *the* anticipation of the future, which such

contemplation of immensity has a powerful tendency to excite, rekindle the ray to enlighten it? It is in scenes like these, when we experience the "felt presence of the Deity," that the spirit rests in a serious, solemn happiness, with a prostration of self before the divine will; an emotion which, though it may bathe the eyes in tears, yet effectually tends to elevate and soothe the heart. Yes, bright are the hopes which such contemplations awaken of a God who softens and embellishes our path of life, and terminates our view by the splendours of his own goodness, unaffected by the revolutions of years, or the rapidity of time. O happy, thrice happy, are those who can resort, in singleness of heart, to the mild and lovely spirit of religion, round which the pure halo of revelation enables them to view in characters of eternal truth, "Hope! hope! What God gave, he will again restore."

These impressions of Deity upon the soul further produce affiance and trust in him, by inducing a belief that those appointments and dispensations of his providence which press

upon our frailty and weakness, are but a part of that universal harmony pervading his great moral government of which such strong and convincing evidences continually arrest the senses in the material operations of his creative power. What abundant reason have we to bless and praise the beneficent Being, who has not left us to discover his goodness by the uncertain conclusions of analogy, but by revelation has lifted the veil! A flood of light has been poured forth, and a hallowed voice has issued from the stream of radiance, "That the sufferings of this present life, are not worthy to be compared to the joys we shall taste, if we endure, through faith in our Redeemer, unto the end.

What a chord of consolation does this sublime passage strike on the bereaved heart! leading it by one comprehensive grasp to blend the past, the present, and the future; and to associate the spirit of love we contemplate with the spirits of light which have been freed from mortal coil!

In fine, those only who possess true sensi*bility*, healthful in all its exercises, can know

how refreshing to the spirit, as well as ennobling to the mind, is the contemplation of creative wisdom, seen through the mild radiance of a Redeemer's love. Majestic in its simplicity, and elevating in its influences, it becomes at once the support of our weakness, the safeguard of our principles, and the source of our most perfect and interesting consolations

——————— "Then liberty, like day,
Breaks on the soul, and by a flash from heaven
Fires all the faculties with glorious joy."

But while we seek alleviation for the lacerated feelings in these contemplations, let us ever remember that it is only to those possessing a religion of deep-seated principle, humility, and faith, that the solace arising from contemplation can be open. The religion of the imagination will be unequal to the trial. Well has our Christian bard remarked,—

"Acquaint thyself with *God*, if thou wouldst taste
His works."

For without God as centre, rest, and end, the

soul under the dominion of a strong passion, so far from finding relief in the calm serenity of natural scenery, experiences an aggravation of grief, from the forcible contrast it forms to the internal agitation.

Solitude, without God felt "near as a friend," does but exasperate the wounds of the heart. The calm and silence which pervades creation, seems to mock the sad tumult of the soul. We may even have a solemn impression of magnificence, power, and beauty upon our minds, our souls may be elevated and expanded by the contemplation of the Divinity, yet, alas! the will may not be bowed to the Almighty will, and his all-righteous government be not acknowledged by submissive resignation to his appointments.

O let us then fervently pray that we may be enabled clearly to perceive the moral relation between our souls and our Creator, and thus perceiving, faithfully act up to our convictions, so that while we are seeking refreshment for our fainting spirits from the magnificence and beauty that surrounds us, we *may love* God supremely, believe in him

firmly, and obey him faithfully; thus shall our souls be opened to the influences of his consolations derived from his operations both of nature and of grace.

"Think it not enough," says the pious and eloquent Dr. Chalmers, "that you have looked with sensibility and wonder at the representation of God throned in immensity, yet combining with the vastness of his entire superintendence a most thorough inspection into the minute and countless diversities of existence. Think of your own heart as one of these diversities, and that he ponders all its tendencies, and has an eye upon all its movements, and marks all its waywardness, and, God of judgment as he is, records its every secret and its every sin, in the book of his remembrance."

But sweet indeed is the contemplation of God in the works of his providence to the sincerely devout. He who has been habituated to approach his God, to spread before him his fears, his hopes, his sufferings, and to implore his consolations, and has thereby nerved the moral habit of his soul, will as-

suredly find, amid the grand and beautiful scenes of nature, a divine serenity pervading his spirit, and a renewal of strength and fortitude replenishing his mind.

Religion, then, by its tender, soul-cheering influences, plainly bespeaks its own origin. It imparts strength both of soul and mind, and, as peace follows the meditations of thought, the spot of enjoyment is in the bosom of retirement.

In retirement and retreat the devout hold converse with the scenes that surround them, while the soul is perfectly attuned and harmonized to the mild and pensive sensations which these scenes inspire, and from which it derives aids for thinking and for living. The varying aspects of natural scenery, and all the incidents that diversify it are harmoniously adjusted to the moral disposition of the mourner, when the soul is made sensible of the folly, and begins to be weary with endeavouring to fashion its own lot, when it tires even of hope, and sighs only for the *absence of pain*. All nature seems to acquiesce and *participate* in these sentiments of man: the

murmurs of the wind, the roar of storms, the still serenity of a summer's evening, the hoary frosts of winter, all these movements of the elements, all these different pictures beget similar impressions and breathe upon the soul that tender and mild melancholy, the most congenial sentiment of man, and which constitutes the only situation of the heart which leaves to meditation all its activity and all its force. It is then that the soul truly rests upon its God, and can with sincerity adopt the sublime apostrophe of our gifted bard:—

Thou art the source and centre of all minds,
Their only point of rest, Eternal Word!
From thee departing they are lost, and rove
At random, without honour, rest, or peace.
From thee is all that soothes the heart of man,
His high endeavour, and his glad success;
His *strength* to *suffer*, and his *will* to serve.
But, O thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all thy gifts, thyself the crown;—
Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor,
And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away.

COWPER.

GOD OUR TRUST.

THE waves of sorrow onward roll,
And murky clouds of dark despair;
Yet, wherefore shouldst thou droop, my soul;
Hast thou forgot the voice of prayer?

Hast thou forgot yon heaven above,
Where high on his eternal throne,
Jehovah's sits, enthron'd in love,
To listen to the sufferer's moan?

His bounteous mercy ne'er shall fail
The heart that seeks for grace aright;
The morn of joy shall soon prevail,
And burst the gloom of misery's night.

Then, anxious thoughts and fears, away;
Ye ne'er shall shake my faith in him:
Why would ye hide hope's golden ray,
Or make the light of gladness dim?

Hence every doubt—all vain alarm ;
I'll bend beneath the chast'ning rod,
And, shielded by a Saviour's arm,
For ever trust in thee, my God.

DELTA.

Christian Guardian,
August, 1834.

BENEFICENCE.

'Tis truth divine, exhibited on earth,
Gives charity her being and her birth.
COWPER.

MUCH alleviation of the sufferings of the heart may be drawn from the exercise of benevolence, provided it emanates from a principle of divine love, deeply implanted in the soul, and not the mere impulse of the feelings, which are of too fluctuating and uncertain a character to impart any salutary influence, to tranquillize thought, or to sweeten the bitter cup of human sorrow.

The one is like the meteor's sudden blaze, which sheds a momentary glare around, and then leaves a twofold darkness; the other *is the* mild and cheering light of the moon,

which sheds its softened radiance on every object, delighting, soothing, and comforting the weary traveller.

Thus to do good to our fellow-beings, from a principle of love to our Creator and Redeemer, sheds a holy balm on the lacerations of our own hearts. It suspends the agonizing action of the soul, by beguiling it of individual suffering, and has often even the salutary power to vindicate the depressed spirit from the thraldom of the absorbing passion, by employing those faculties of mind which give their poignancy to the arrows rankling in the breast. Perhaps much effort is at first required, for the spirit to resort to the source of consolation which the practice of beneficence opens to the bereaved; but a daily increasing consciousness of a useful moral existence soon becomes a lively, delightful sentiment, even though a certain degree of lassitude should succeed the fatigue of self-exertion. It is while sympathizing with the sufferings of others, and rendering them all the aid in our power, that the consideration of our own *particular lot is* absorbed in pity for that of

others, and a melancholy is produced more easily to be endured than the pangs which accompany our individual sorrows; for while we are led to reflect on the generations that have succeeded each other through a series of sorrows and of ills; while we contemplate those worlds without number, where millions of beings are tasting at the same time with ourselves, either the bliss or the bitterness of existence; the intense ardour of the individual sentiment is tempered, and abstraction steals us from ourselves. To seek for happiness not by the indulgence of selfishness, but through the exercise of the soul's best feelings and most exalted principles, places us in a situation which elevates, while it soothes and calms the soul, for it appears in some measure to spiritualize the being. The providence of God may have placed us in desolate and obscure circumstances, yet beneficence may extend the effects of our existence, and bestow upon every individual one of the attributes of power—that of influencing the lot of others.

A generous being, whatever be his situation,

may, by devoting himself to the principle of beneficence, create an interest in his heart, an aim for his endeavours, and a balm for the wounds of sorrow, only inferior to that derived from direct communion with his God.

It is a beautiful evidence of the beneficent love of our almighty Father, that he has constituted the human heart to feel the emotions of pity. It is a disposition in the soul of man that has in it something peculiarly sublime, inasmuch as it devotes itself to the protection of the helpless, and the aid of the suffering. Indeed, this sympathy for distress is an affection so powerful, that any attempt to resist its influence argues a degree of depravity from which we turn with loathing and disgust. There is a real and substantial comfort derived from the exercise of this sentiment, as it almost seems to form a bond of union between man and his God. A God who announces himself "a God pitiful and gracious."

By showing pity to our suffering fellow-beings, we do indeed "act up to his plan, and form to his the relish of our souls;" while

the consciousness of doing so imparts a peace which only a Christian philanthropist can know or understand. The blessed gospel, that simple and sure guide and measure for all our actions, is replete with precepts and exhortations for the exercise of this heart-cheering sentiment: even beatitude is promised to those who, from a right principle of love faithfully fulfil the obligations it involves. "Love to God and love to man" is the Christian code; the graces are inseparably united. The tenderest pity lent to the words of our blessed Redeemer, our divine Exemplar, a persuasive unction: and who can fail to admire the forcible and awful lesson he has given, in explaining the close union established between our sentiments towards the Supreme Being, and our duties towards our fellow-men? Having termed the love of God the first commandment of the law, he adds, "and the second, which is *like unto it*, is to love thy neighbour as thyself."

The second, which is like unto it! What simplicity, what extent in that expression! *What can* be more interesting and sublime

than thus to offer continually to our mind, the idea of a God taking upon himself the gratitude of the unfortunate? Even the most abject and miserable appear, as it were, encompassed with the symbol of glory, when the love of humanity becomes the expression of the sentiments which elevate us to God.

We do indeed seem to draw closer to our almighty Father, when we may thus hope to maintain an habitual intercourse with him, by the services we render to the afflicted. This single thought diffuses an added refulgence on our duty, sufficient to cheer us even in the darkest cloudings of temporal sorrow:—"Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these, ye did it unto me."

Further, the persuasives, the encouragements, the motives, and the exhortations which pervade the gospel of peace, should elevate our thoughts, and penetrate us with a profound and awful veneration; for the whole is an exhibition of that divine goodness which preceded time, and which surpasses man's understanding. By the exercises of *pity we are im*pressively recalled to, and

united with this sentiment, more ancient than the world, a sentiment by which we have received existence, and the hopes which compose our present happiness.

He who, under the pressure of heavy sorrow, resolved that no day should pass without doing or zealously attempting to do some service to a fellow-creature acted a wise part; for nothing more effectually transports us beyond the material space we inhabit, than thus, as it were, expanding our existence: and to divert our cares and solicitudes for ourselves to other objects is a species of moral regeneration which richly deserves much sacrifice; sacrifices which perhaps cannot be understood but by those who have been unhappy.

But not only does the exercise of benevolence soothe the feelings, by tending to "fill up the void in torn affection's heart, which yearns to be supplied;" but also by preserving the tenderness of grief, while it softens its poignancy. The spirit is thus sooner induced to yield itself up to that tender regret which gives a sacredness to every pensive *recollection*, associating our purest and most

exalted sentiments with the departed, making us "to love the place where now they dwell," mingling with high and pure intelligences in the adorable presence of their Creator and Redeemer!

While bestowing relief on our fellow-creatures, the mind reverts, with salutary feeling, to that blessed Saviour who, by his illuminating spirit of grace, opened to us this glorious and happy futurity, for a participation of which the sorrows of time are intended to discipline and prepare our souls; while we are encouraged by his example, when clothed with humanity, to perform every good work, for it was *his* meat and drink to do the will of his Father in heaven. The heart softened by grief should thankfully expand itself to receive the consolations God has graciously provided. It should melt into tender sympathy and kind affection for those whom the chastening hand of God hath touched! All must be aware that our present comfort and happiness depend much on the exercise of mutual kindness. We are not made for solitary enjoyment, nor are we in any sense sufficient

for ourselves. We continually need the assistance of others, and for complete enjoyment, require participation. Gracious and kind therefore is the Giver of all good, who has endued us with those principles of good-will and sympathy towards each other.

By hearkening to the still small voice of pity speaking in our hearts, we are prompted to do good and to improve and strengthen the general good-will to mankind, that generous, but calm principle which cannot compete with strong passion, without being aided by the divine principle of love to God. Is it when possesing the means of gratifying every desire—when strangers to pain, to sorrow, to bereavement, that wé heartily attend to, or truly feel for the sufferings of our fellow-men? Is it not rather when the arrow has pierced our own heart, when we ourselves know what it is to suffer, when we have had personal experience of pain and sorrow, that we learn to give a compassionate attention to the sorrows of others? When we have ourselves tasted of the bitter chalice of affliction, we shall most assuredly be best disposed

to feel for those involved in similar distresses; and when we thus own the benign influence of sympathy and act upon it by hastening to the relief of the afflicted, and endeavour to administer consolation to their sorrowful hearts, a soothing balm will be graciously vouchsafed, and shed upon our own.

It has been beautifully observed by Dr. Chalmers, (see Bridgewater Essay,) "God has so constituted our nature, that in the very flow and exercise of the good affections there shall be the oil of gladness. There is instant delight in the first conception of benevolence; there is a sustained delight in its continued exercise; there is a consummating delight in the happy, smiling, and prosperous result of it. There is a happiness in the very wish to make others happy. There is a heart's ease, and a heart's enjoyment even in the first purposes of kindness, as well as in the subsequent performances."

But as mourners we draw from even deeper and more copious fountains of consolation than those named. By calling into useful action the feelings implanted in our hearts,

we derive the exalted pleasure of giving glory to our God, and of imitating the bright example of our blessed Lord, with whom, through faith and hope, we are enabled to associate the beloved beings we mourn, removed from this transient scene of trial and probation, to fulness of joy and life for evermore!

Let us not then suffer our benevolent feelings to languish in inaction, under the pressure of absorbing grief, when every hour of life is, as it were, fraught with opportunities for its employment. Innumerable are the occasions by which we may prove our love to God by our love to man. By him, let us remember, we are placed under high responsibilities, briefly comprehended under the plain and simple precept, "Do good unto all men, as ye have opportunity."

To the fulfilment of this duty, our divine Lord introduced us by the impressive force of his own perfect example. He went about continually doing good to the bodies and souls of men; and even in the midst of his *own bitter* agony, was mindful of the weak-

ness, the sorrows, and the wretchedness of others. He has graciously bestowed upon us a moral capacity for the performance of good, while in his wisdom he has provided, by the dispensations of his providence, objects for the exercise and trial of our obedience to his commanded duty, or, (to use the expressive words of the same gifted writer, cited above,) "a rich gymnasium where we may learn, if not the triumphs of benevolence,* at least some delicious foretastes of that full and final blessedness, for which the scholarship of human life, with its manifold engagements and duties, is so obviously fitted to prepare us.

"The heart that feels another's woes,
Shall feel each selfish sorrow less;
And he that happiness bestows,
The purest happiness shall bless."

* Original, "virtue."

STANZAS.

" This world is all a fleeting show."
MOORE.

THERE is an hour of peaceful rest,
To mourning wand'rers given;
There is a tear for souls distrest,
A balm for every wounded breast;—
'Tis found above,—in heaven!

There is a soft and downy bed,
'Tis fair as breath of even;
A couch for weary mortals spread,
Where they may rest the aching head,
And find repose—in heaven!

There is a home for weeping souls,
By sin and sorrow driven,
When toss'd by life's tempestuous shoals,
When storms arise, and ocean rolls,
And all is drear—but heaven!

There faith lifts up the tearful eye,
The heart with anguish riven,
And views the tempest passing by;
The evening shadows quickly fly,—
And all serene—in heaven!

There fragrant flowers immortal bloom,
And joys supreme are given;
There rays divine disperse the gloom:—
Beyond the confines of the tomb,
Appears the dawn of heaven!

From the Franklin Gazette.

THE ORATORY.

"What an asylum has the soul in prayer!"

"I WILL lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." Such was the resolve of the sweet minstrel of Israel, who was wont to address God his Creator, as friend talketh to friend.

And what, we may enquire, what shall sustain the mourner in the hour of sorrow and bereavement, but thus looking to the hand which chastens,—to the almighty Being who alone holds in his power the antidote to the poison of grief which "drinketh up the spirit?" Let us then pray!

It has been most expressively observed by one who was well acquainted with sorrow and bereavement, "Prayer was born with the first sigh, the first joy, the first sorrow of the *human* heart; or rather, man was born to

pray. To glorify God and to implore him, was his mission here below; all else perishes before him, or with him, but the voice of glory, of admiration, or of love, which he raises towards his Creator does not perish on his passing away from the earth. It reascends; it resounds from age to age in the gracious ear of the Almighty, like the echo of his own voice, like the reflection of his own magnificence! It is the only thing in man which is wholly divine, and which he can exhale with joy and pride, for *this pride* is a homage to him to whom alone homage is due, the infinite Being."* Let us then pray! And thou, O God, who hast inspired this marvellous communication with thyself, with beings and with worlds invisible, thou, O God, hear us favourably, for thy benignity is as supreme as thy power!

Prayer! mighty ascent, language wing'd, supreme,
Which in a single sigh blends all of love.—
Incense unquenchable, which doth perfume
Him who receives, and him who lights the flame.
Ib. 89.

* Pilgrimage to the Holy Land, vol. iii. p. 46.—LAMARTINE.

Oh, when the spirit is brought low, even to the dust, and the heart appears desolate in the bosom of the mourner, it is then that the full value, the high privilege of prayer is felt and fervently acknowledged. It is in seasons like these that we are led to recollect that a time there was when even the soul of our dear divine Master (that time when drinking the bitter draught

"Mix'd by the hand of death, and drugg'd in hell,")

was exceeding sorrowful, and endured an agony so intense, that he prayed that cup might pass untasted by his hallowed lips! And what did he then do to sustain his suffering soul in that dread hour, that he might accomplish the work his heavenly Father had given him to do?

Verily, he did that which, in seasons of heaviness peculiarly, the disciples of his faith and the heirs of his salvation should learn of him and do likewise. Seeing that the chalice of agony was not to pass from him, but that to accomplish our salvation, to afford us con*solation*, and to guide us into all truth, he

must drink it even to the very dregs, he evinced the entire resignation of his soul, and gave his precious life, saying, "Not my will but thine be done." The former part of his lowly petition, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me," is the anguished voice of that human nature that he, in great humility and transcending love, assumed, in order to redeem us guilty rebels. It was that nature which recoiled with terror before the dark shadow of death. It was that assumed nature, yielding to those feelings the Creator has implanted in the heart of man. The Almighty therefore, we may be assured, cannot disapprove or condemn their expression, provided they are duly regulated; and it is a great consolation to the afflicted soul, that our blessed Saviour was touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but without sin; therefore we may solace ourselves, that we have in him a sympathising as well as an efficient friend!

In contemplating the exalted character of our divine Exemplar, "that man of sorrows *and acquainted* with grief," we find he inva-

riably practised what he taught. In the awful scene in the garden of Gethsemane, how impressive and how beautiful is his example to all those whom the hand of God hath touched!

"And being in an agony, he *prayed the more earnestly.*" In fact, the life of our blessed Lord may emphatically be called a life of prayer; and let us ever remember that it was for us he prayed; even for us sinners he spent the silent hours of night in supplication and intercession; for us he was overwhelmed with grief and tribulation. Yes, surely, "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; the chastisement of our peace was upon him." Let us then humble ourselves under his correcting hand. Let us learn, from the affecting contemplation of our blessed Redeemer's agony, a better wisdom than our own; learn it even from him who brought it from above; and learn, amidst the sufferings which rend our hearts, more highly to appreciate those elevating hopes which those sufferings have been, perhaps, the appointed *means* to teach us Let us learn that afflic-

tion is to be borne with deep humility, as the punishment of sin, to be endured with fortitude as the instrument of good, to be accepted with thankfulness as the discipline of our God, whereby he trains us to righteousness, and fits us, through the precious blood of our Redeemer, and the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, for his kingdom of glory.

"Scenes of deep distress await us all in this our earthly pilgrimage, but we have the bright example of our blessed Lord, as a model for our behaviour in the days of our sorrow."

We behold him afflicted, "smitten of God" for us, yet resigned. "My Father, not my will, but thine be done." Such should be the aspiration of every mourner. We behold him grieved and wounded, yet submissive; not insensible to suffering, but increasing the ardour and fervency of prayer, in proportion to the pain and acuteness of feeling. "Prayer was the refuge he sought from the tremendous storm, the whole fury of which burst upon his sacred head. Prayer the *most earnest,* urgent, repeated, continued,

proceeding from the inmost recesses of his soul. Prayer for deliverance, prayer for strength, and, above all, prayer for resignation."—ARCHDEACON PALEY.

Notwithstanding the extreme agony of mind, in that hour of mysterious conflict, our Redeemer had to sustain in the dark season of the travail of his soul, he displayed for our example the utmost firmness and fortitude. The constant termination of his prayer was the same, "Not my will, but thine be done." Surely then, with this hallowed example before us, we cannot fail to learn the refuge which we ought to flee unto when sorrow and anguish assail us!

We are not only permitted, but invited and encouraged by the practice of our blessed Lord, to pour forth our sorrows, and make our supplications before the throne of grace for help in time of need, but we are also permitted to pray for the removal of our calamities with earnestness and with fervour.

We may implore that the bitter cup of affliction may pass away from us, but the *conclusion* must always be what his was,

" Not as I will, but as thou wilt." Though our eyes may be suffused with tears, yet let us raise them with religious fervour up to our God, who marks the anguished sigh, and bitter tear: at the footstool of the eternal source of all consolation let the mourner thus pray to him; " I submit myself, O my God, to thy holy will in all things: I meekly acknowledge all is good since thou wilt have it so. Behold me here distrusting myself, but trusting in thee, O my God. Continue, I beseech thee, to guide me in thy ways; lead me where thou wilt, and how thou wilt; but, O, deign to make me feel myself led on by thee, and vouchsafe from time to time to reveal thyself to my darkness with one of those rays of glory which illumine the dark horizon of affliction. If I can but feel myself supported by that immortal hope which thou hast left upon the earth like the voice of those who have passed away; if I shall be restored to them in the vision of thy ineffable unity, this will sustain me, this will support me to the end of my pilgrimage. But grant, O merciful God, that the way be not too rugged for my already

lacerated feet."—(LAMARTINE, freely.) But this way, however dark, or rugged, or dangerous, leads to glory, and peace, and immortality! where he, whom we have contemplated as our pattern in the garden of agony, shall appear in the full majesty of his glory, attended by all those who by faith and patience inherit the promises. And who are they? The volume of truth informs us, "These are they who came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb."—(Rev. vii. 14.)

It is from the same blessed transcript of the divine mind, we learn that it is through our Redeemer that we have access unto God by his Spirit. This spirit of holy communion is one of our most exalted privileges. It is the Spirit of Christ Jesus that helpeth our infirmities in prayer, that forms our petitions, that enables us to pray in faith, with life, with fervency. Moreover it is in the exhaustless spirit of his love that he now continually intercedes for us: that love is constant and everlasting. He pleads for us *in* "heaven his dwelling-place," that our

persons may be accepted by the God we have offended, our sins pardoned, our prayers answered, and that the Holy Spirit may be vouchsafed to teach, sanctify, and comfort us; that Holy Spirit of truth which will shed his healing balm over our souls, and preserve us from sinking, under the severest trials. Mark the gracious words of our Redeemer, the very spirit of love and comfort breathes in them: "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, even the Spirit of truth; he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Thus, when affliction arises, our compassionate Lord promises not to leave us comfortless. When flesh and heart fail, when friends depart, when life recedes, our heavenly Comforter will not fail, but will remain with us, will strengthen us, and will be a light in the darkest hours and a cordial to raise our drooping *spirit, oppressed* with a weight of sorrow.

Oh, it is in the hours of bereavement and sorrow, that the value of spiritual blessings is chiefly felt, when the earthly cistern is broken, or the human gourd is withered; when worldly expectations are blasted or disappoint us in possession, then it is that the Christian does most emphatically rejoice in his God, and joy in his Redeemer! If, then, our afflictions induce such desirable practical consequences, they will surely be felt and eventually acknowledged to be really "blessings in disguise."

The glorious dispensation under which a Christian lives is an intercourse between the Creator and the creature.

Man approaches his God, and spreads before him his wants, his sufferings and his dangers; and God in mercy and loving-kindness communicates to him from heaven grace and strength and consolation, as the answer of his prayer, and the fruit of his faith.

Oh, it is not by the resolutions of our own will, by the mere exertion of natural fortitude, by the force of moral obligation, or even by *a speculative* knowledge of the gospel system,

and its powerful motives, that we can endure afflictions as Christians. That knowledge only can be efficacious which is acquired by frequently "bowing the knee" in fervent and sincere prayer. It must be imparted from above by the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who rejects not the lowly petition—Teach me to pray, O Lord, my God! and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from my petitions.

The hour of sorrow is the time which more especially tries the stability of the foundation on which the Christian hope is built. It is then that the genuine disposition of the soul is manifest, and that the supports and consolations of divine grace are most abundantly vouchsafed to the sincere and humble Christian. It is then that a sweet consciousness of the divine presence gives peace to the desolate, for it enables the heart to reflect—"I am not alone, for my heavenly Father is with me; he hath promised he will never leave or forsake me!"

Let us assure ourselves that believing prayers are acceptable to our God. Let us

pray that he will graciously pour out *his Spirit upon us*, that we may pour out *our hearts* before him. If our hearts are affected and willing, our supplications will be frequent and earnest. If the Spirit of God teach us to pray earnestly, it will also teach us to wait patiently, assuring us that the mercies which are in the hands of our God will be given to us in his own good time.

It may be safely asserted, that if we pass our life in faith and prayer, we shall close it in peace and comfort. How soothing is the thought that "man was made for communion with his Creator;" it is the excellence of his nature to be capable of this end, the happiness of it to be raised to enjoy it. This blissful communion is actually and highly enjoyed in the exercise of prayer.

In times of deep distress, when the soul is oppressed with griefs and fears, what a sure relief is found in pouring out all we want and all we desire into the bosom of God, as a faithful and powerful friend, and most tender father! In all our affliction he was afflicted, and in his *love* and in his pity he redeemed us. Thus may

the distressed soul rest quietly upon the love, power, and gracious promises of God, assured that it is not *in vain to seek him* who despiseth not the sighing of the afflicted. The rich comforts derived to the soul from prayer, and the high privilege it confers of converse with our God, is pathetically and forcibly expressed by holy David:—

"O Lord my God, I cried unto thee, and thou hast heard me. I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my prayer, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live. I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy, O Lord, for thou hast considered my trouble. Thou hast known my soul in adversities!

"Make thy face to shine upon thy servant, and save me for thy mercies' sake.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, all ye that hope in his mercy.

Our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants *and none* of them that trust in him *shall be desolate.*

I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly, I go mourning all the day long. Lord, all my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee.

Forsake me not, O God. O my God be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation. Remove thy stroke away from me, I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. Hear my prayer, O Lord, give ear unto my cry; hold not thou thy peace at my tears. I will cry unto thee when my heart is overwhelmed. Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. I will trust in the covert of thy wings.

I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in trouble.

Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee. What time I am afraid I will trust in thee. Trust in him at all times; pour out your heart before him. God is a refuge for us. Blessed be God who hath not turned away my prayer, nor hid his *mercy* from me!

O let us then continually pray for the

spirit of prayer, the exercise of which gives the soul a foretaste of that blessedness to which, through the atoning merit of our Redeemer, it conducts us, where they shall be exchanged for hymns of praise to

Messiah, fairer than the sons of men,
And altogether lovely. Grace is poured
Into thy lips,—above all measure poured;
And therefore God hath blessed thee evermore,
And crown'd thee Prince of endless peace.
Glory to God and to the Lamb!!

Father! whate'er of earthly bliss
  Thy sovereign will denies,
Accepted at the throne of grace,
  Let this petition rise:—

Give me a calm, a thankful heart,
  From every murmur free;
The blessings of thy grace impart,
  And make me live to thee.

Let the sweet hope that thou art mine,
  My life and death attend;
Thy presence through my journey shine,
  And crown my journey's end.

PRAYER ON BEREAVEMENT.

" Life, like an empty dream flits by,
And where are they?"

O MY GOD, heavenly Father, sanctify, I humbly beseech thee, this affliction to me, and give me grace to conform my will to a meek and calm submission to thine, that I may receive this stroke of thine almighty hand without murmuring and repining at the dispensations of thy providence. Temper my grief, O God, with the consolations of thy Holy Spirit, and make up to me in internal peace what I may want of external comfort. Let this bereavement, which thou in wisdom hath appointed, bring me effectually home to thyself, and possess my mind with such a firm sense

and conviction of the uncertainty of all worldly blessings that my heart, my hopes, and my whole desire may be fixed on that world whither those I have loved are gone before, where all tears shall be wiped off all faces. Suffer me not, O my Father and my Friend, suffer me not to grieve as those who have no hope! Remove far from me every impatient thought of thy providence, because thou hast taken from me the great comfort of my life. I know, heavenly Father, that thou canst make up this great loss to me, by giving me great and valuable blessings, even the sense of thy divine favour, and the assurance of eternal reunion!

O enable me to submit to thy will, not only in word, but in heart, and to repose myself under the care of thy righteous providence, assuredly believing that I can never be destitute while thou art my friend, nor miserable while thou deignest to be my preserver. I beseech thee, therefore, to grant me the comfort of thy love; let it be my portion, and my inheritance, the support of my life and *the relief of* my sinking soul under all the

troubles and afflictions, thou in thy wisdom mayst appoint.

I humbly supplicate the acceptance of this prayer, which in anguish of spirit I pour forth unto thee, O my God, through thy beloved Son Jesus Christ, our Lord. *Amen.*

PRAYER.

O THOU, in whose sight all hearts are open, pour down upon me, I beseech thee, an abundant measure of thy grace, that I may with a confiding heart make my requests to thee. Look down, O merciful God, from the sanctuary of thy holiness, and behold my sorrow. Pity, O Lord, thy suffering servant, and strengthen with thy almighty power. Though troubled on every side, yet let me not feel desolate; though perplexed, O suffer me not to despond.

Forsake me not, though thy righteous hand hath cast me down. Let this affliction under which I bow, heavy as it is to nature, work out for me what thou designest, namely, eternal *glory,* through thy beloved Son. O

remember not against me mine iniquities; let thy tender mercies raise me, for I am brought very low. Help me, O God of my salvation, for the glory of thy name, and for the sake of thy dear Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

" 'Tis thy God smites! My soul, be strong,
And kiss the hand that deals the blow!"

HYMN.

GOD OUR ONLY REFUGE UNDER THE LOSS OF FRIENDS.

" It spreads beyond, it soars above
The instincts of an earthly love."

THE God of love will sure indulge
The flowing tear, the heaving sigh;
When righteous persons fall around,
When tender friends and kindred die.

Yet not one anxious murmuring thought,
Should with our mournful passions blend;
Nor should our bleeding hearts forget
Th' Almighty, ever-living Friend!

Beneath a numerous train of ills,
Our feeble strength and heart may fail;
Yet shall our hope in thee, our God,
O'er ev'ry gloomy fear prevail.

Parent and husband, guard and guide,
Thou art each tender name in one;
On thee we cast our every care,
And comfort seek from thee alone,

Our Father, God! To thee we look,
Our rock, our portion, and our friend;
And on thy boundless love and truth,
Our sinking souls shall still depend.

PRAYER.

"O my God hearken unto the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee."—2 CHRON. vi. 19.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, mercifully attend to the supplication of me, a sinner, and through the mediation of my compassionate Redeemer, who himself, as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, is verily touched with a feeling of human infirmity. I am not indeed worthy of the least of thine abundant mercies, for I have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed. O God be merciful to me a sinner!

But who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin?

I know that thou delightest in mercy, or I should not dare to lift up mine eyes to thee in that place of purity where thou dwellest. How often hast thou called me and I refused to hear; yet thou still callest to my heart, Turn ye, turn ye, why will you die?

O my God pardon my base ingratitude, and say unto my awakened soul, "I am thy salvation."

Pour now upon me, O my gracious Redeemer, the spirit of grace and supplication; and, O incline my heart to answer to thy call. Thy face, Lord, I will seek, turn not thou away; I will seek thee with my whole heart, O visit me with thy salvation! make me to know and to feel thee ever near to support, to comfort, and to save * *

* * * * *

Let the Spirit of truth lead me into all truth, and so open the eyes of my understanding that I may perceive what thou requirest, and find that wisdom which may enable me to act according to thy pleasure. O let my trust be alone in the merits of my Redeemer.

Give me, O gracious Father, rest through his travail, health through his wounds, and eternal life through his death * *

* * * * *

As a pilgrim travelling from time to an awful eternity, help me, O my God, help me to walk by faith, and not by sight. Grant that as my day is, so may be my strength. Show me, O my God, the path wherein I should walk, for I lift up my soul unto thee; hold thou me up, and then shall I be safe!

As a helpless and dying worm, to whom, O God, should I go but unto thee? Thou, thou only hast the word of eternal life. Thou, thou only canst uphold my feeble steps in the rugged paths of the world.

Thou hast promised to supply all my wants, thou hast promised never to leave or forsake those who lean on thee. O fulfil these gracious promises; be with me for ever. O save and bless thy desolated servant.

Graciously vouchsafe to guard me from all outward dangers, and inward misgivings.

During life be ever with me, when I come to die deign to support me; and save me, O save me, most merciful God from the worm that dieth not, and bring me, through the all-sufficient merits of my Redeemer, to that everlasting rest thou hast promised to those who love thee and obey thee. *Amen.*

RELIGION.

HYMN.

OPPRESSED with every anxious woe
A mortal can sustain;
While with the day my sorrows grow,
And life wears out in pain.

Where can I ease or comfort find,
Or how relieve my care?
What can preserve my tortur'd mind,
From sinking in despair?

Thou canst, Religion—thy bright beams
My soul benighted cheers;
A pleasing ray of comfort gleams,
And chases all my fears.

To thee my raptured visions soar,
And thy bright paths pursue;
The world's false joys can please no more,
When heavenly are in view!

Note.—The hymn was repeated by the mother of the Writer, when in the very article of death, at the advanced *age of 83 years.*

SUPPLICATION FOR A LIVELY FAITH.

"Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am in trouble. My eyes pour out tears to thee, O God of my life."

O MY GOD! heavenly Father! infuse into my drooping soul that clear faith which enables the believer's eye to penetrate beyond the darkness of this clouded scene, and to receive every trial as the chastening of a Father's love, however grievous it may prove to poor frail humanity.

Almighty and ever-present God, cheer with heavenly hopes the heart heavily bowed down. Tune to heavenly themes the voice that now wails in sorrow, and if it be thy *blessed* will, remove thine afflicting hand from

me. Sanctify, I beseech thee, every trial of my faith and patience thou appointest, and vouchsafe me continual supplies of thy grace to glorify thee, by patiently waiting thine own good time for relief. I humbly implore this through the name and merits of my blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—*Amen.*

PRAYER.

"Lord be thou my help."

O my heavenly Father, upon whose almighty arm I now desire to lean, thou hast promised to hear the cry of the desolate. Hear me as I now lift up mine eyes to that place of purity where thou dwellest in light inaccessible, except by thy beloved Son, our gracious Redeemer.

Bestow on me, I humbly beseech thee, the riches of thy grace, enable me entirely to renounce myself, and raise in me a holy elevation of soul, a boundless hope in thee, an unswerving love and an unclouded faith in the merits of my Redeemer. Then will my afflictions appear to me what they really are, a *passing* dream, which shall make me more

gladly to welcome the splendours of that rising morn which will display to my longing eyes the glories of heaven, and the felicity of those who have passed through great tribulation.

O mercifully grant that I may rank with those happy spirits through the merits of my blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. To whom be glory, &c. *Amen.*

PRAYER.

"Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him."
PSALM xxxvii. 7.

ENABLE me, O my God and my Redeemer, to wait patiently, and never to distrust thy willingness to comfort, nor thy love to succour the creatures of thy power. Cause me, through the benign influences of thy Holy Spirit, unreservedly to commit my way to thee. Suffer not my feet to slide, nor my heart to faint.

Alas, I am poor, weak, and helpless; I have strong and subtle enemies without, and a corrupt heart within. Uphold me, gracious God, that I fall not. O Lord, be not thou far from me. Plead thou my cause and *stand* up for my help! Say unto my soul

I am thy salvation; fear not! In thee, O Lord, do I hope. Thou wilt hear me, O Lord my God, and my heart shall praise thee; and *thought* is praise to thee—

Audible praise to thee, Omniscient Power,
From whom all gifts descend, all blessings flow.

O graciously accept what I now offer in the name of thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

FOR SUBMISSION TO THE WILL OF GOD.

"Do with me what seemeth good in thy sight."

O MY God, and merciful Father, I am thy creature, my entire dependence is upon thee; grant that it may continue firm and steadfast, for I know my hope, and my trust shall not be in vain. Thou hast promised, gracious Lord, thou wilt never leave or forsake those who depend upon thee; grant that I may never forfeit this inestimable privilege. Suffer me not to be dismayed at any calamity thou, in wisdom, may appoint: convince me that all things shall ultimately work together for good to those that love thee. Take from *me all* sorrow which the love of transitory

things may at any time raise in me, from the calamities or evils of this life.

O God, thou only canst know what is expedient for me. I beseech thee, therefore, to guide and govern me, according to thy good pleasure. Give me or take from me as it seemeth best to thy providence, and in all things vouchsafe to conform my will to thine. Grant, merciful God, that I may with humble confidence and submission, equally reverence and adore the different events thou shalt ordain to prove me, as I am too ignorant to ask aright, and cannot desire one event before another, without presumption, and without boldly making myself the judge of all that train of future things which thy perfect wisdom has compassionately concealed from mortal view. I know, O Lord my God, that my whole knowledge may be reduced to one point, viz. that it is good to obey thee, and evil to offend thee.

Any thing else surpasses the capacity of finite beings, and lies hid among the secrets of thy providence, which I will reverence and *adore: but grant,* O my God, that I may never

attempt to trace or penetrate, dispute or murmur against.

Finally, O my God! I commit my life and the dearest concerns connected with it, to thy all-wise disposal, beseeching thee, for the sake of my blessed Redeemer, to bring me to everlasting glory.—*Amen.*

HYMN.

Come, let us join our friends above,
That have attain'd the prize;
And on the wings of eagle love,
To joys celestial rise.

Let all the saints terrestrial sing
With those to glory gone;
For all the servants of our King
In earth and heaven are one.

One family we dwell in him,
One church above, beneath;
Though now divided by the stream,
The narrow stream of death.

One army of the living God,
To his command we bow;
Part of his host have pass'd the flood,
And part are crossing now.

ASPIRATIONS.

In thee, O Lord, do I hope. Lord hear my voice and let my cry come unto thee, for thou art my hope, my refuge, and my strong fortress: lead me therefore for thy name's sake, and guide me.

O Lord, thou redeemest the souls of thy servants, and none that trust in thee shall be desolate.

O Lord, I am troubled, I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long, but I know, Lord, all my desire is before thee, my groaning is not hid from thee. In thee, O Lord, do I hope; wilt thou not hear, O Lord my God?

The Lord thinketh upon me, he is my helper and deliverer. Make no long tarrying, *O my God!* The Lord upholdeth those that

fall, and raiseth up all those that are bowed down. The Lord is nigh unto them that call upon him, yea to all them that call upon him faithfully. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry and will save them.

" God of my fathers! holy, just, and good;
My God! my Father! my unfailing Hope!
Jehovah! let the incense of my praise,
Accepted, burn before thy mercy-seat,
And in thy presence burn, both day and night.
Maker! Preserver! my Redeemer! God!
Whom have I in the heavens but thee alone?
On earth, but thee, whom should I praise, whom love!
For thou hast brought me hitherto, upheld
By thy omnipotence; and from thy grace,
Unbought, unmerited, though not unsought—
The wells of thy salvation, hast refreshed
My spirit, watering it at morn and even;
And by thy Spirit, which thou freely givest
To whom thou wilt, hast led my footsteps on.

* * * * * * *

Jehovah, breathe upon my soul, my heart
Enlarge, my faith increase; increase my hope;
My thoughts exalt; my fancy sanctify,
All, all my passions, that I near thy throne
May venture unreproved.

Come gracious Influence, breath of the Lord!
And touch me trembling, as thou touch'd the man
Greatly beloved, when he in vision saw
By Ula's stream the Ancient sit; and talked
With Gabriel, to his prayer swiftly sent
At evening sacrifice. Hold my right hand;
Almighty! hear me, for I ask through him
Whom thou hast heard, whom thou wilt always hear,—
Thy Son, our interceding, great High Priest!"

He who took our nature upon him, suffered death upon the cross for our redemption, who by his death destroyed death, and by his rising to life again hath restored to us everlasting life. Therefore, O God, most holy, O God, most just, O God, most merciful, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, I laud and magnify thy glorious name, evermore, (as is most due,) praising thee and saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts, heaven and earth are full of thy glory. Glory be to thee, O Lord most high. *Amen.*

MUSINGS ON THE PAST.

They have not perished,—No.
Kind words, remember'd voices, once so sweet,
Smiles, radiant long ago,
And features, the great soul's apparent seat—

All shall come back! Each tie
Of pure affection shall be knit again.
Alone shall evil die.

HEMANS.

True, all things pass away,
But *past* things are not *dead*.
In the heart's treasury,
Instinct, they hidden lie
Unwithered!

And there the soul retires,
From the vain things that are,
To mingle oft and long
With the time-hallow'd throng
Of those that were!

Then into life burst out
The scenes long vanished.
Then we behold again
The forms that long have lain
Among the dead!

We seek their grasp of love,
We meet their beaming eye,
We speak—the vision's flown,
Dissolving with its own
Intensity!

Look up, look up, my soul,
To loftier mysteries;
Trust in his word to thee,
Who saith, "All tears shall be
Wip'd from all eyes."

And when thou turnest back,
(Oh, what can chain thee here,)
Seek out the isles of light,
On memory's waste yet bright;
Or, if too near

To desolate plains they lie,
All dark with guilt and tears,
Still, still retrace the past,
Till thou alight'st at last
On life's first years.

There not a passing cloud
Obscures the morning scene;
No blight on the young tree,
No thought of what may be
Or what hath been.

There all is hope—not hope,
For all things are possest;
Yes, bliss without alloy,
Simplicity and joy,
Cheer the young breast.

Then on *what is* I deeply muse
No more in young delight;
But patient, grateful, well-assured,
Whatever sorrows are endured,
All, all is just and right.

Then clouds dispel, dark shadows flee,
The sun of joy breaks out,
And love, and hope, and gratitude,
Chase far away the gloomy mood
Of darkness and of doubt.

I feel that all is in his hand,
(Ah who would take it thence?)
Whose love divine protects me still—
Give me not up to mine own will,
Merciful Providence!

Such thought, when other thoughts perchance
Are darkening into gloom,
Comes to me like the angel form,
That radiant shone mid death's dark storm,
And, standing by the tomb,

Cheer'd those who came to sorrow there ;—
And then I see and bless
That mercy daily which unfolds
His love in all that he withholds,
And all that I possess.

PRAYER
FOR ENTIRE RESIGNATION.

" O gently falls the chastening rod,
On those whose hope is in their God."
DALE.

ALMIGHTY God, who alone seest the end from the beginning, give me entire resignation to thy will.

Overrule all things, I humbly beseech thee, even circumstances the most apparently adverse, to thy own glory and the present and immortal interests of me, thy frail and sinful creature, who now prostrates herself before the throne of thy grace for a continual renewal of the spirit of holiness, of fortitude, of love, and of obedience.

From thee only, O gracious Lord, can it proceed. O turn not away from my petition which with earnestness and sincerity of heart I now most humbly make unto thee. Let

the experience of thy love and favour towards me during my past life, teach me to resign myself to thee, to choose thee as my only support and comfort, to rely steadfastly on all thy promises, and to wait with patience till thou shalt, in thy wisdom, relieve me from my sorrows.

I ask this, O my God, in perfect submission to thy blessed will, and through the intercession of the adorable Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Lord bless me and keep me, the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon me.

The Lord give me peace, even that peace of his which passes all understanding, through the merits and mediation of my dear Redeemer, Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with the Father and the eternal Spirit, be all honour, glory, love, service and obedience throughout all ages. *Amen. Amen.*

FINIS.

J. Rickerby, Printer, Sherbourn Lane.